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# The Reading Teacher

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# *The* Reading Teacher

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## Time of Troubles

READ THIS issue of THE READING TEACHER with great care. The first two articles tell a shocking story. The next three speak of action and hope. Then two more define quality.

Toynbee writes about a final period of civilization that is presaged by a "time of troubles" culminating in a universal state, in which law and order are enforced by a kind of external authority. There is not one among us who would not rise against such a state and vehemently oppose it if the challenge came as a direct, frontal assault.

He also writes about a transfiguration in which withdrawal is succeeded by a return with vision and strength. Are we ready to return and respond to the challenge in the Harvard-Carnegie Reports on Reading with renewed vigor and purpose, and create for our children a prolonged and transfigured life?

Or, could it be that we are passing through *The Crises of Our Age* as defined by Solokin? Are our present ideals those of colossalism? Are they confining us with a sickness?

*The Torch Lighters* is the title of the complete Harvard report on reading prepared by Mary Austin. This is a most fitting title if only now the full quotation from Plato is realized: "Those having torches will pass them on to others." Light your torch. Use this report to kindle the

spirit that will be strong enough to avoid the universal state.

Of all the improvements which America's foremost educational reformer and statesman started, the founding of the first state normal school in 1839 was probably the most far-reaching. Horace Mann, believing devoutly that education must be universal and free, realized that to achieve this aim required an adequate supply of appropriately trained teachers. Can we now take up his torch with renewed vigor and accomplish the twenty-two points in the Harvard report.

Apprenticeship or serfdom; the challenge is clear. Specifically, the idea of apprenticeship reminds us of a youth who is bound to a master for a number of years to learn a trade or profession. Match this with the report in Part II, on pages 308-313, Theory, Practice, and the Apprenticeship Program.

At present the prospects for the human race do not offer any basis for easy optimism. If we are agreed that education for all is our best means of brightening that prospect, and that sound reading instruction is the foundation of a good education, then our conviction should inspire us to action. The arsenal of democracy is not a storehouse of missiles but a schoolhouse of ideas.—R.G.S.

## Harvard-Carnegie Report on Reading—I College Courses in Reading

by MARY C. AUSTIN AND ANN R. GUTMANN

**I**N SPITE OF all the fuss and furor about why Johnny and his siblings can or cannot read, too little attention has been paid to the professional preparation of those persons who are charged with the responsibility of teaching children to read at the elementary school level. In an effort to gather information relevant to this subject, the Harvard-Carnegie Reading Study was initiated in 1959.

While the report giving the results of this study\* includes information about various characteristics of the teacher preparatory program, including admission policies, the practice teaching experience, and other related features, its major findings, and many of the twenty-two recommendations which follow the body of the report, deal with the specific instruction given to prospective elementary school teachers of reading.

### General Objectives

Turning first to the general objectives of college courses in reading instruction, we find that most of the

courses share the same goals. Regardless of whether reading instruction is given as a separate course, is taught as part of one in the language arts, or built into a broad one which includes the content and methodology of most elementary school subjects, the same general objectives seem to obtain. Differences appear only in the degree of emphasis which individual instructors place on one aspect or another of the reading course.

Instructors are in substantial agreement that their courses must give students a solid base in the techniques and materials essential to the teaching of elementary grade reading skills; that students must be able to translate the theoretical concepts which they have mastered in the college classroom into meaningful experiences for their pupils in the public school classroom; and that, in order to do this, students must have an appreciation of the importance of reading as a necessary feature of everyday living. Furthermore, the instructors believe that, in order to carry on a successful reading program, the prospective teachers should understand the principles of child growth and development and the relation of these to the reading program, although for best results these principles should be handled in a separate course under the guidance of a person skilled in the area.

\*The Harvard-Carnegie Report is based upon: (1) an interview study of 74 colleges and universities throughout the United States and (2) a questionnaire survey of 371 colleges and universities. The schools participating in the study comprise 70 per cent of all institutions where prospective elementary teachers are prepared. The results of this study are given in *The Torch Lighters*, by Mary C. Austin, Coleman Morrison, and others, Harvard Graduate School of Education, distributed by the Harvard University Press (March, 1961).

## Implementation

There is no question that college instructors in reading incorporate in their aims the transmission of features of a successful reading program which have found great favor among, and are endorsed by, acknowledged experts in the field of reading. Unfortunately, a rather wide gap between professed goals and their practical implementation frequently appears. College instructors are seldom to blame for their lack of success in meeting their stated goals. They are handicapped by lack of time, lack of materials, and lack of knowledge on the part of the students whom they teach. This is not true of all areas of the reading curriculum but, as will be seen below, any one or all of these deficiencies can wreak havoc with particular aspects of the reading program.

In an effort by the study group to ascertain the major emphases in subject matter, instructors were asked to indicate which topics in their reading course received the most stress, and almost half of them mentioned materials and techniques of instruction. Closely following on these topics was that of instruction regarding the readiness program, also reported by almost half of the respondents. Then followed, in turn, the word attack program, the psychology of the reading process, and adjustment to individual differences. Other responses showed that those instructors who concentrate at all on the higher reading skills do so through teaching study skills which will aid the intermediate grade pupil to learn the

material presented in the content areas, such as social studies, arithmetic, and science.

Only one reading instructor indicated that he attempts, in anything more than a general way, to acquaint his students with the symptoms, causes, and remediation techniques of severe reading disabilities. On the other hand, however, most instructors felt that if time permitted they would give students at least an introduction to diagnosis and treatment of reading disabilities, although such a view is counteracted somewhat by an equally strong conviction that in most instances undergraduates are not prepared to cope with such problems and that such instruction belongs on the graduate level. The most that can be done for undergraduates, say these instructors, is to guide them in determining which reading problems require clinical attention and which, through careful instruction on the part of the classroom teacher, can be resolved under normal conditions.

When one looks at the whole range of emphases as reported by the college instructors, one thing is immediately apparent. Instructional time given to the primary grade reading skills far outweighs that given to intermediate grade reading skills; and instructors are forthright in admitting this. They are very desirous of spending more time on what might be termed the higher reading skills, but the long standing problems of lack of time and materials and of student inability prevent their doing so. An examination of the present

teaching of critical reading skills will, perhaps, illustrate this point most clearly.

Unless collegiate curricula include courses in both primary and intermediate grade reading skills (and this is very rarely the case) the instructor must per force include both in a very limited amount of time, and something must be sacrificed. Clearly this something seems most often to be the critical reading skills, partly because of the lack of materials relating to critical reading. If cries for more time are those most frequently heard among teacher preparatory staffs, those for more materials are hardly less so and are often just as plaintive. Even if there were time to do an adequate job of the teaching of critical reading skills, appropriate materials would be lacking. Therefore instructors have good reason to suggest, as they often do, that there must be research to develop materials which will make it possible for prospective teachers to be thoroughly grounded in that aspect of the reading program. But still another problem remains in this area. Unfortunately, provision of time and materials alone will not suffice. Instructors are badly handicapped in their teaching because their students are either wholly or partially deficient in such skills themselves. Valuable time must be spent in teaching college students how to think and read critically before any actual instruction in the use of these skills can be begun in the elementary classroom.

A similar condition is present, but

to a far lesser extent, in the teaching of word recognition skills. Here again, instructors agree concerning the approaches which they use, and differ only in degree of emphasis. Generally, this area of the curriculum is well covered, with most respondents advocating a multi-varied or eclectic approach. There was strong opposition to excessive emphasis on the teaching of phonics in isolation. Phonics was seen as but one of several methods of word attack and one which demanded more attention only because college instructors had to stop to give students basic training before they could proceed with more advanced course work.

Again agreement was found concerning methods used in the teaching of study skills. Instructors concurred in the opinion that the general study skills involve ability in locating pertinent information, in organizing and evaluating it, and finally in learning techniques which will assure the retention of information. A major question, however, dealt with how best to assure pupil mastery. The real problem in this part of the reading program arises in reference to study skills when related to specific content areas of the curriculum. While instructors as a whole felt that social studies faculty were careful to teach their students the skills needed in social studies, arithmetic and science faculty members were viewed as remiss in this regard in their fields. Only if the reading instructor also teaches the other content areas of the curriculum are the reading skills per-

inent to all subjects more adequately developed.

In contrast to the difficulties encountered in the teaching of study and critical reading skills, and to a lesser extent word recognition, the fields of children's literature and appreciation of literature were usually reported as well covered. In over half the colleges visited, such instruction was in the hands of a special teacher, and in these cases students appeared to be receiving unusually good preparation. This was less true where children's literature was given only as part of the reading course and where, as usual, time was limited; but generally, college reading instructors were satisfied that in all probability their students would be well equipped to handle a recreational reading program and would have a broad fund of knowledge upon which to draw as beginning teachers.

In the area of instructional techniques to meet the needs of individual pupils much the same general agreement is found concerning objectives. While there is increasing concern over the place of the gifted reader in the elementary school, college instructors are generally of the opinion that his needs can best be met in the regular elementary school classroom among children of his own age, if not necessarily of his own reading ability. It is believed that provision can be made to so challenge and stimulate the gifted reader that he, and society, will profit from his unusual ability. In order to do this, and still keep him in the company of his peers, college instructors

advocate reading and more reading, including special assignments along the lines of the gifted pupil's interests and ability. However, they also emphasize that such children, to be properly motivated, must be in the rooms of teachers capable of providing the time and attention necessary.

Unfortunately for the gifted reader as well as for the rest of society, inculcating prospective teachers with techniques of handling individual differences appears to be one of the most difficult aspects of teaching the reading course. Students find the techniques difficult to acquire, and their instructors themselves confess to being somewhat at a loss in this area. They admit that they do not do enough to acquaint their students with ways in which to enrich the program for the gifted. Again lack of time is the culprit, and the difficulty is compounded by lack of materials. The problem is complex and varied and college personnel have no ready panaceas to offer. Most of the faculty are convinced that the student's own initiative and imagination will have to carry her through, although in-service programs, advanced courses, and independent study could provide invaluable help.

While, as was noted, the collegiate attitude regarding provision for the gifted reader is quite specific, this is not the case for the disabled or retarded reader. Although there are a few college programs which enable the undergraduates to elect a course in the diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties, and two which

make such a course mandatory, it may be said generally that most students graduate into teaching positions with only a vague concept of the problems confronting the poor reader, and less idea of what the teacher can do about them. Most instructors, while deploring this situation, are in reality not too concerned, for they think that a course which would equip teachers to handle remediation belongs properly in a graduate school. The immediate concern of the faculty involves establishing guidelines by which the teacher may help the child with reading difficulties which do not require the attention of specialists.

In connection with provisions for individual differences among the children, some mention should be made of the attitude of college reading instructors toward the individualized reading programs, currently being advocated by a number of people. Many instructors see much good in such a program, but most are hesitant to adopt what amounts to revolutionary practice without further proof of its worth. They also feel that the individualized reading program cannot supplant, at least at the primary level, basal reading series with their sequential development of reading skills. And most of them doubted the efficacy of such a program except in the hands of highly experienced and unusually competent teachers. Furthermore, much additional research was thought necessary before the value of the individualized reading program could be considered proven.

### **The Teaching Apprenticeship**

Still another aspect of collegiate preparation of teachers of reading deserves mention: the teaching apprenticeship. Apart from the amount of time devoted to the reading course and the material available, a beginning teacher's success in presenting a meaningful and dynamic reading program to her class will depend in large measure on the quality of her apprenticeship experience. Instructors, and students as well, report their opinion that students are greatly influenced by their "master" teachers and tend to adopt the practices they see in effect in the public school classrooms rather than those they are taught in the college classrooms, whenever there is a disagreement between these. Thus it is evident that without an effective apprenticeship program closely related to the theory advanced at the college level, a student's preparation to teach in the field of reading will be inadequate.

Many respondents showed a commendable frankness in discussing the less favorable aspects of their college programs, and an impressive awareness of the weaknesses of the college reading courses as presently constituted; but such weaknesses alone cannot be blamed for all failures in instruction on the part of the beginning teacher. Without some effort on the part of both the college and the local school to bridge the gap between theory and practice and without their mutual concern, improvement of courses by college reading instructors will have only limited effect.

## Recommendations

Improvements on the college level can lessen some of the problems with which classroom teachers are now faced. Toward this end, the study staff submitted recommendations, most of which were based on practices found in one or more colleges in the United States. It is the hope of the staff that these recommendations will receive attention and careful consideration by all for whom they are relevant. Among them, the following are particularly pertinent for reading instructors: (1) that the class time devoted to reading instruction, whether taught as a separate course or integrated with the language arts, be equivalent to at least three semester hours' credit; (2) that the basic reading instruction offered to prospective elementary school teachers be broadened to include content and instructional techniques appropriate for the intermediate and upper grades; (3) that college instructors continue to emphasize that no one method of word recognition, such as phonetic analysis, be used to the exclusion of other word attack techniques; (4) that students be exposed to a variety of opinions related to other controversial issues of reading, such as grouping policies, individualized reading, pre-reading materials, and techniques of begin-

ning reading instruction; (5) that college instructors take greater responsibility for making certain that apprentice teachers have mastered the principles of phonetic and structural analysis.

Above has been given the picture of college reading instruction today as seen by college reading instructors. Much has been done to improve it in the last decade but much remains to be done. It will take the best efforts of many groups of people—college faculty, public school administrators and teachers, students, and parents, among others—but the best is little enough to ask if in the end it produces children who read, who read with comprehension, with critical minds, widely, and appreciatively.

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## Harvard-Carnegie Report on Reading—II Theory, Practice, and the Apprenticeship Program

by COLEMAN MORRISON AND MARY C. AUSTIN

**T**HAT THERE IS merit in the maxim, "Practice is the best of all instructors," is borne out by the testimony of college administrators and reading instructors. Almost unanimously they agree that the practice teaching program is the most essential ingredient in an adequate professional preparation of the prospective teacher of reading.

Yet, on the basis of the findings of the members of the Harvard reading staff as reported in their recently published account of the collegiate training undertaken by future teachers,\* it appears evident that (1) practice teaching programs are not always organized to produce optimum results for the apprentice teacher, and (2) the cooperating classrooms to which students are assigned frequently do not serve as successful adjuncts to the college classroom.

### Organization of Practice Teaching

Looking first at organizational patterns of practice teaching, the staff found that in a large percentage of schools (81 per cent) the students were allowed to wait until their eighth or final semester of baccalaureate preparation before participating in this program. Worse yet, in some schools they *must* wait until

then. The disadvantages of such a late period of practice teaching are fairly obvious: during their apprenticeship students may manifest weaknesses in the techniques of teaching, in their understanding of child development and personality, or they may lack adequate foundation in one or more of the content areas which they are expected to teach. Furthermore, the prospective teachers usually will not return to the college campus for additional work to correct their deficiencies unless graduation is denied them, and this is seldom the case.

A second disadvantage of final semester student teaching is that the time usually coincides with the second half of the academic year in the elementary school. Therefore, practice teachers have no opportunity of participating in the initial readiness activities of the primary grades, or in the organization of class programs in any of the elementary school years. In one cooperating school where college students are placed in the spring term and hired as permanent faculty after graduation, the principal complained that when students came from the university in March or April, they inherited the grouping plans previously formulated by the cooperating teachers and, consequently, had no real understanding of the process. When

\*See footnote, page 302 of this issue of *The Reading Teacher*.

as beginning teachers they reported the following fall, they were often at a complete loss in the matter of organizing children into reading groups. This disadvantage is sometimes overcome where colleges require a "September Experience."

Another disturbing force at work in the apprentice training program was the assignment of supervisors who do not teach content and method courses in the elementary education department. This procedure was observed in slightly more than half of the 371 schools that participated in the study. As a result, the reading instructor is in no position to determine how effectively his students apply the theories advocated in the college classroom, or to offer guidance to the apprentices who have difficulty in resolving the conflict between their college professors' teaching and their cooperating teacher's practices.

In an effort to overcome the problems arising from the separation of specialized course work and practice teaching, some colleges offer instruction in reading and related elementary school subject matter at the time of the practice teaching experience. However, in almost every instance such a plan necessitates the assignment of students to a cooperating school on a half day or staggered hour basis. Where such schedules are in effect, coordinators of the practice teaching program, local school personnel, and frequently reading instructors as well, felt that part-time practice teaching did not offer students the advantage of observing the

reading program as a continuous whole. Indeed, in those schools where students were practice teaching on an irregular schedule many were unable to take part in more than one or two reading lessons. At least one college has solved its predicament by arranging for the content and methods courses in elementary education to be organized in a block program. Instruction is then alternated with practice teaching on a four week basis. The following schedule illustrates the fall semester of a student's senior year:

Sept. 5-16 (the first two weeks of school).  
Observation, Woodlock elementary school

Sept. 19-Oct. 14. Specialized elementary  
education courses

Oct. 17-Nov. 10. Practice teaching, Wood-  
lock elementary school

Nov. 14-Dec. 9. Specialized elementary  
education courses

Dec. 12-Jan. 20. Practice teaching, Wood-  
lock elementary school

Jan. 23-29. Seminar: problems and policies

Only rarely was it found that colleges adjusted the duration of the practice teaching program to the needs of individual students. An exception was noted in the departmental requirements of one midwestern college which specified that a student's apprentice experience must be continued until teaching competency was attained. Although administrative problems in scheduling make such flexibility difficult in most schools, it is to be hoped that colleges will at least re-examine their present criteria for evaluating prospective teachers so that passing grades do in fact mean that the students have achieved a desired level of competency. At the present time it appears that each student who

undertakes practice teaching can anticipate a satisfactory grade, irrespective of her performance. Evidence to support this contention can be found at another midwestern college, where the attrition rate is typical of that of other locations. There the director of student teaching reported that all but two of the five hundred individuals enrolled in the practice teaching course had received passing grades. The director did not know whether the two students had withdrawn from the course because of unsatisfactory work, or from college for other reasons. It is not surprising that the number of failures in practice teaching at this college was insignificant, since admission officials served as the college supervisors while they toured the state in their roles as recruiting officers.

### **Selection of Cooperating Teachers**

The key person in the practice teaching program is generally conceded to be the cooperating teacher under whose guidance students are introduced to classroom teaching. As far as we know, no one has measured scientifically the extent of the influence that cooperating teachers have upon the teaching techniques of prospective teachers, although college faculty, students, and the cooperating teachers themselves believe it to be considerable. Granting that the cooperating teacher in a participating program, such as practice teaching, is likely to exert somewhat more than minimal influence upon her appren-

tices, one would assume that she should be a skilled educator, academically and professionally prepared to guide prospective teaching candidates. Unfortunately, such is not always the case. Indeed, in many communities throughout the United States the methods employed by the colleges in selecting cooperating teachers are questionable. Typically, the coordinator of practice teaching tallies up the number of students to be assigned to a given school system, reports this figure to the school superintendent or an administrative assistant, and then hopes that the necessary "master" teachers will be available. Meanwhile, in the superintendent's office, a bulletin is prepared asking for volunteers who will accept student teachers in their classrooms. As one elementary school principal stated, "The administration takes anyone who volunteers, without additional screening. And the colleges are so happy to have a spot to assign their students that they don't ask any questions or do any additional screening of their own."

Where the above method is utilized, the college supervisor is likely to find that students are assigned to a variety of classroom situations, ranging from those with dedicated teachers who feel a professional duty to nurture their prospective associates to others where teachers are seeking assistants to relieve them of numerous clerical duties.

Fortunately, a few colleges and some state legislatures, recognizing the problem, have taken positive action to improve their practices in

the selection of cooperating teachers. Eight states now require the certification of classroom teachers before they accept appointments as cooperating teachers. Requirements vary in each situation, but they may necessitate special course work in administration and supervision and the holding of advanced degrees in Education. Several institutions call for the equivalent of a master's degree and a minimum of two years' teaching experience. Perhaps the most satisfactory arrangement in the selection of capable cooperating teachers is one which allows college supervisors to visit the classrooms of prospective cooperating personnel for the purpose of evaluating their teaching abilities and supervisory potential.

Despite the fact that some colleges have upgraded the policies regulating the selection of cooperating teachers, many institutions are confronted with a problem of yet another nature: the retention of superior ones. That many "master" teachers do not choose to continue their relationships in the apprentice training program, and that other gifted classroom teachers are reluctant to undertake the guidance of college students is understandable in the light of three factors.

First, colleges do not offer professional status to the cooperating teachers, nor consult them about either the organization of the apprenticeship program or the philosophy underlying this particular phase of teacher preparation. One cooperating teacher, disappointed when the college did not include her in the

group responsible for the reorganization of the practice teaching program, said, "We need an active part in planning course content at the college, since we are in the best position to observe the present weaknesses of the students and could help strengthen the college curriculum by advising the staff regarding additional course work (which) the students need and what content might best be eliminated. However, we are never consulted about such matters. The student is just dumped on our doorstep in February and collected in June." Other cooperating teachers complained because they are not accorded faculty privileges at the college, such as the use of professional libraries and faculty recreational facilities.

Second, financial remuneration from the colleges is inadequate. Only slightly more than half of the colleges visited offered such reward to cooperating teachers, and in most cases it did not exceed fifty dollars. Frequently the amount of money given cooperating teachers depended on the number of semester credits earned by the students. When there was no financial arrangement at all between colleges and cooperating teachers, the latter were occasionally given tuition-free vouchers and/or the privilege of buying athletic tickets at reduced rates. Cooperating teachers felt that such gestures were of slight value.

Third, the burden of preparing prospective teachers is often fatiguing and time consuming. Aside from directing the teaching activities of

the novice, the cooperating teacher is expected to prepare reports and evaluations, attend college seminars or meetings, and allay the fears of parents that the progress of their children is being jeopardized by the student teaching program.

The above factors contribute to the reluctance on the part of many teachers to participate in the college program. Though not insurmountable, they are doubtless responsible, together with passive screening policies, for the fact that many students are placed in classrooms where the practices of cooperating teachers are unrelated (and sometimes in opposition) to the theoretical concepts developed in the college courses.

### **Integration of Theory and Practice**

How then do these conditions affect the prospective teachers of reading? Eight out of ten respondents, who observed in the classrooms where practice teachers were assigned, complained that the reading instruction offered in the local schools did not approximate that advocated at the college level, nor was it in accord with research findings pertaining to effective methods of teaching reading. In particular, college staff members found these conditions to prevail in the cooperating classrooms.

1. If any effort was made to group children for reading lessons (in some intermediate grades children are still reading from the same page of the same book), this was done on an ability basis. The separation into so-called "fast," "average," and

"slow" groups, which at one time was thought to be a revolutionary movement, has now become sacrosanct. The arrangement of grouping children into one of three groups is considered by many teachers as a solution to the problem of meeting the needs of their pupils. Little effort, therefore, is made to offer individual assistance to each child or, what is worse, to adjust instructional techniques to the different "ability" groups.

2. The absence of instruction in reading skills at the intermediate grade level, particularly the critical reading skills. In these grades, when any formal teaching of reading at all is done, it usually consists of reteaching the primary grade skills.

3. Excessive reliance on basal readers and their accompanying manuals as the chief, if not the only, tool of reading instruction.

4. Oral or "barbershop" reading practices consisting primarily of rote reading in turn as the teacher calls "Next" after each child has completed a paragraph or a page of reading.

5. Considerable emphasis on "drill" lessons without consideration for the fact that children should also be reading for enjoyment. Similarly, the absence of a recreational reading program.

6. Seatwork exercises which are intended primarily to keep children occupied and are not related to the skills instruction under development.

7. Excessive use of phonics and phonics workbooks in the development of recognition skills without

regard for other analysis techniques.

8. Silent reading checks and comprehension questions, founded solely on factual information, which fail to develop the pupils' higher mental processes of interpreting, reasoning, making judgments, and drawing conclusions.

### Recommendations

This brief report of the findings of one part of the Harvard-Carnegie Study makes it clear that the objectives of the undergraduate preparation of prospective elementary teachers are not being met successfully in many colleges. Re-examination of the whole practice teaching program is needed, with attention focused upon the basic organization of the program, and the selection of cooperating school systems and cooperating teachers. In an effort to assist colleges in realizing the full potential of their current practice teaching situations, the authors of the total report made several recommendations, including the following:

1. That the staff responsible for teaching reading and/or language arts courses be sufficiently augmented to allow each instructor time in which to observe and confer with students during the practice teaching experience and to consult with the cooperating teacher and administrative personnel.

2. (a) That colleges recruit, train, and certify cooperating teachers; (b) that such cooperating teachers serve in the capacity of associates to the college; (c) that as associates to the college, cooperating teachers partici-

pate in the formulation of practice teaching programs, in related seminars, and in the final evaluation of student performance; and (d) that as associates to the college, they receive financial remuneration commensurate with their role.

3. That colleges appoint a liaison person to work directly with the local school system in order to achieve closer cooperation of the schools with the college and to assist the public school in up-grading reading and other academic instruction.

4. That colleges encourage students to remain in local cooperating schools for a full day during the practice teaching program so that they may come to understand the continuity of the reading program.

5. That when the student is found to have specific weaknesses in understanding the total reading program she be required to return to the college for additional course work after her practice teaching, and that when a student is weak in the area of instructional technique her apprenticeship be prolonged until competency is attained.

6. That college administrators make every effort to coordinate reading instruction with the practice teaching program.

*(Coleman Morrison is Assistant Director of the Harvard-Carnegie Reading Study. A former elementary school teacher and principal, he is completing requirements for his doctorate in education at Harvard. A note about his co-author, Mary C. Austin, will be found above at the end of the preceding article.)*

## Reading in Pennsylvania Schools

by SHELDON MADEIRA

ON ALL SIDES can be heard comments of dissatisfaction with, and doubts about, the efficacy of the instruction in English on pre-college levels. The orbiting of Sputnik momentarily seemed to relegate to a less major area of public attention English instruction, but this was temporary.

Even before Sputnik the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was planning to hold a conference for the improving of instruction in all areas of the curriculum. The representative conference of school directors, legislators, lay people, government officials, school superintendents, curriculum and guidance personnel, college instructors, deans and administrators voted overwhelmingly that instruction in reading should be made a part of the secondary school program.

On February 26, 1958, the State Council of Education recommended increased instruction in reading for the school year 1958-59 and mandated such instruction for the 1959-60 program.

Not all schools waited for a mandate. An examination of the Secondary School Report showed that 157 schools were doing work in reading, excluding the larger cities, some of which had excellent reading instruction programs.

On February 5, 1960, the Bureau of Curriculum Services of the Department of Public Instruction re-

leased a memo based on returns from a December 18 questionnaire. The form was sent to a sampling of 404 schools—the tabulation reflects the status in 369 of the 993 secondary schools of the Commonwealth—the practices in 37 per cent of the high schools.

Paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of the memo are here reproduced.

The Department of Public Instruction wishes to call your attention to several significant reactions based on returns. We find encouragement in the fact that administrators had the wisdom to institute an in-service education program for seventh- and eighth-grade reading teachers in two-thirds of the schools reporting. This, we believe, is good. The practice in 50 per cent of the cases of providing an average of one period per day for each reading teacher for class preparation is a commendable start. Although reading is taught as a cycle in only twenty-eight of the schools reporting, it is suggested that the matter of cycle scheduling in minor subjects could be a fruitful area for study. The 81 per cent who favor a mandated program in reading appear to us to be conversant with the obligation of the school to its pupils in the area of communications.

We believe that three matters deserve serious consideration. We believe that twenty-five + classes per week are far too many class contacts for efficient teaching in reading (59 per cent of the replies indicate twenty-five and more classes per week). Associated with this is the matter of class size. Sixty-nine per cent of the classes have thirty or more pupils. A class of thirty hardly results optimally. The third facet deserving attention is the matter of teacher preparation. A situation in which 50 teachers out of every 100 have no reading preparation is startling! This is mitigated somewhat by the fact that of the other 50 per cent many teachers have as many as thirteen semester hours of reading preparation.

Class size, number of sections met per

day or per week, and the total number of pupil contacts in our opinion appear far too heavy to achieve the goal envisaged by the State Council. We feel that you should know the situation in order that you may re-examine your own program if necessary and make satisfactory changes.

The Reading Survey Summary is interesting in a number of respects.

1. The total number of pupils in grades seven and eight receiving reading instruction of two or more periods per week is 144,684.

2. Fifty per cent of the schools provide an average of one period per day for each reading teacher to be devoted exclusively to class preparation.

3. Sixty-six per cent of the schools have held an in-service training program for seventh- and eighth-grade reading teachers.

4. Reading teacher load: (a) Of the teachers involved, 17 per cent teach fewer than ten classes per week, 4 per cent of the teachers teach ten to fourteen classes, 3 per cent teach fifteen to nineteen classes, 17 per cent teach twenty to twenty-four classes, 35 per cent teach twenty-five to twenty-nine classes, and 24 per cent of the teachers teach thirty or more classes per week. (b) The enrollments of the seventh- and eighth-grade reading classes per week show that 6 per cent of the classes have fewer than twenty pupils, 25 per cent have twenty to twenty-nine pupils, 62 per cent have thirty to thirty-nine pupils, and 7 per cent of the classes have forty or more pupils.

5. A survey of the number of semester hours in reading completed or in process of completion by the teachers of reading showed that 50

per cent of the teachers have no semester hours, 19 per cent have one to three semester hours, 3 per cent have four to six hours, 8 per cent have seven to nine hours, 6 per cent have ten to twelve hours, and 14 per cent of the teachers have thirteen or more semester hours.

6. A mandated program of instruction in reading for seventh- and eighth-grade pupils was favored by 81 per cent of the schools. Some of the reasons given for favoring a mandated program of reading follow: Elementary grades cannot provide all the development in reading that pupils need. . . . Improvement in any skill can come only from continuous practice. . . . The teaching of reading helps to improve instruction in all areas. . . . A mandated program is the only way a reading program would be conducted in many areas. . . . Students need to be encouraged to do more reading. . . . Reading is a fundamental prerequisite to continuous educational development and attainment. . . . Reading helps to raise the achievement level in all classes. . . . Improvement in reading skills can provide students with a much better chance for a successful school experience. . . . Need for oral interpretations. . . . So that reading will not be neglected. . . . Pupils need an opportunity to review, refine, and apply the reading skills developed in elementary school. . . . Developmental reading is just as essential as any other phase of the educational program. Without good sound reading how is a pupil going to make normal progress? . . . Reading is the

foundation for all subjects. . . . Reading classes are a definite advantage to all pupils, regardless of varying ability. . . . Without a mandated program many children in need of further reading instruction would not receive it. . . .

The comments accompanying negative responses were interesting, enlightening, and in some cases disheartening. The comment most frequently made reveals a lack of agreement, perhaps a lack of information on the major premise on which universal instruction in reading is based. The average and the above average pupils are involved in developmental reading instruction. There are skills and appreciations which are not present in the kindergarten through sixth grade program of instruction. Research shows that all pupils will profit from instruction in reading, even if gifted. One could well say that if all pupils can profit from instruction in reading, all pupils need this instruction. No one seriously questions the general objective of education, to give the pupil the opportunities he is capable of using. It follows, therefore, that if all pupils can profit from instruction in reading, all pupils should be given reading.

Disagreement with this premise is wide spread, however (26 of 67 comments). The following comments are eloquent: Not for all pupils. . . . Required only as needed. . . . Where necessary. . . . If need exists. . . . Some . . . do not need. . . . Mandated no better than voluntary. . . . Vary in reading needs.

. . . Not for all pupils. . . . Needs should be determined. . . . Only to pupils who need it badly. . . . When we discover the need. . . . Not convinced . . . where it belongs. . . . Mandated . . . in lower groups. . . . Capable to pursue other activities.

An aversion to mandates is rather frequently expressed by those who do not favor a mandated program of reading instruction: "Mandation of the results in program in name only" if extended to the whole school program might lead to the conclusion that nothing should be mandated or that all mandated programs could be programs in name only. "The state mandates too much in the Junior High School."—Is mandating units in English, mathematics, science, fine and practical arts, and health and physical education too much?

Just where should the line be drawn between options and mandates? Is the response in public education a local function? Does the state's responsibility for public education carry with it the necessity for certain minimal standards? "Local needs and local conditions"—This concept violates a basic premise of public education that all pupils have certain basic needs which are not affected by local conditions.

One wonders on examining the "comments" whether the real reasons are the stated ones—the arguments for flexibility, local option, local needs and others—or whether the real reason is found in the phrase "too difficult to schedule," an aversion to change and the chores involved in making changes. There

seems to be solid security in that which is established.

Perhaps the most convincing argument for mandated reading instruction is eloquently expressed in the if-it-were-not-so-serious-it-would-be-humorous comment, "Requirements become rigid" (*sic*)—or isn't spelling related to reading?

One facet of the reading program which seems worthy of attention is the activity of college teachers of reading. From the beginning they were intensely interested, a condition easily understandable, since the colleges naturally are charged with the preparation of teachers. The Bureau of Curriculum Services held three one-day conferences, attended by twenty-three college teachers of reading.

On the agenda were the following topics: definition and orientation of terms, certification of teachers, content of courses for teachers, and problems of the teacher of seventh- and eighth-grade reading.

Certification suggestions: Personnel certified for the elementary curriculum or English employed to teach reading in grades seven and eight after January 1, 1965, must have a minimum of six credits in the teaching of reading. Personnel certified in fields other than the above must meet the prescribed minimum reading course requirements and present evidence of additional qualifications such as further course work and specialized experience.

Content suggestions: The six credits in the teaching of reading should include the following areas

deemed important by the committee.

1. Orientation (basic concepts in reading instruction)
2. Reading and the secondary school curriculum
3. Readiness for instruction
4. Appraising and providing for language levels and needs
5. Directing reading activities
6. Experience approach — multi-level teaching
7. Vocabulary development
8. Development of comprehension skills
9. Developing study habits and skills
10. Rate of comprehension
11. Analysis of reading problems
12. Specific reading activities and problems in content fields
13. Materials of instruction
14. Practicum
15. Wide independent reading for personal enrichment

As part of the attempt to be helpful, all seventh- and eighth-grade teachers of reading were asked what they considered were the major problems with which they desired help. They were also asked if they wished to attend a state conference whose purpose would be to help the classroom teacher. Many replied, stating their desire and willingness to attend. The facilities of the Millersville State College have been made available for a two-day meeting on June 15 and 16.

One hundred seventy-one problem areas were suggested for the agenda, some of them by as many as ten people. These areas fall roughly within twenty-six categories, and the suggestions will form the basis for discussion in the June conference. Listed in fragmentary form are the major problems—

- Class size
- Correlation of language arts and reading programs
- Coordinating reading instruction with other subjects

Drill books  
 Evaluation  
 Furniture and equipment  
 Gap between elementary and secondary schools  
 Gifted children  
 Grading  
 Homework  
 Identification of reading difficulties  
 In-service program  
 Library services  
 Materials, course of study  
 Methods  
 Progress charts  
 Reading machines  
 Reading rate  
 Remedial reading  
 Reporting to parents  
 Scheduling, length of period  
 Spelling  
 Teacher-teacher relationships  
 Testing, group and individual  
 Visitation  
 Who should teach reading

This report is incomplete without special reference to the leaders of reading in colleges, county offices, and other interested education units. They have been of inestimable help to our Department of Public Instruction in furnishing leadership for our program of reading in the secondary school.

In the initial stages of the program a manual for administrators seemed to be the most urgent need. The Administrator's Guide to Reading issued by the Department of Public Instruction was in a large part the work of Dr. Morton Botel, Dr. Ethel Maney, and Dr. Rosemary Wilson. Doctor Botel has been of additional help in reporting to the Curriculum Commission of the Commonwealth, of which he is a member, the status of reading.

Among those from colleges who have made striking contributions are the following: Dr. Elona Sochor, Temple University; Dr. Albert Mazurkiewicz, Lehigh University;

Mr. Paul R. Drumm, Kutztown State Teachers College; and Dr. M. Jerry Weiss, Pennsylvania State University.

In education an appraisal of a long-range program on the basis of one year's duration is extremely difficult. If the reaction of the administrators who are involved is a valid criterion, the concept of a mandated program is a good one. Certainly the superior teacher of English has in the past been teaching developmental reading in spite of her multitudinous other duties.

It is conceivable that final assessment of the program cannot validly be made for a generation. If the comprehension and interpretation skills are the only areas of improvement, the idea must be classed as a salutary one.

One far-reaching trend seems to be emerging in this program even in its incipient stages. By drawing attention to the skills (comprehension and interpretation, vocabulary, study and oral reading as well as those related to varying rates of reading), those responsible for reading instruction have brought to the attention of all subject teachers the concept that every teacher is a teacher of reading—the English teacher directly, and the other teachers in an auxiliary way. This trend augurs well for the improvement of instruction in the Commonwealth.

*(Sheldon Madeira is the Assistant Director of the Bureau of Curriculum Services of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction.)*

## A State Superintendent Comments on Some Problems in a State Reading Program

by CHARLES H. BOEHM

GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY of providing only one educational service to upgrade education generally, I would choose the employment of experts in the teaching of reading.

My interest in the teaching of reading began in 1931, when I found that the elementary teachers asked me, a new elementary school supervisor, many questions on the teaching of reading. Some years later I started my doctorate by asking my committee for permission to elect a course in the teaching of reading. By 1946, administrators and school directors asked me, then county superintendent, to add a specialist in reading to the county supervisory staff. They indicated that they would be willing to support such a proposal in the county convention for school directors. In a short time Bucks County became, therefore, the first county staff in modern times to add a reading specialist. In my thirty years in the county office I never saw a specialist in such constant demand. I was soon to learn that teachers and parents unendingly acclaimed the services of this specialist. Many of the districts added full-time reading specialists, and counties and cities elsewhere in the state followed. But this program was rather unique.

More than three hundred years ago Bacon gave the prescription for the full man, the ready man, and the exact man. His oft-quoted "Reading

Maketh A Full Man" assumes, of course, the ability to read. Doubtless, he recognized that language is simply the vehicle by which thoughts are transferred from one person to another. One fundamental obligation of our schools is to help the child get ideas from others and to convey to others his own ideas. Reading thus becomes a tool, not a subject, which the child uses in all areas of life.

One might assume that any tool on which a large percentage of the time of the child is spent while he is in grades one to six, and which he uses as a means of gaining information in practically all other subject areas, would receive much attention in the preparation of teachers. This assumption is false.

Three years ago a survey of course offerings in reading in fifty-nine institutions in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania revealed that 73 per cent required three credits or less in the teaching of reading for graduation in elementary education. Only 26 per cent required more than three hours. Almost 50 per cent of the colleges preparing elementary teachers required only one course in the teaching of reading, while 20 per cent did not even offer a course in the teaching of reading.

Only 4 per cent of the colleges preparing secondary teachers required a course in the teaching of reading. Two colleges preparing elementary

teachers offered no basic course in the teaching of reading! This was true in spite of the widespread criticism that Johnny can't read. And even though many believed that there are skills and appreciations which the child usually doesn't acquire in grades one through six—skills which normally are taught in grades seven and eight. The fact is that college instructors complained loudly about the lack of reading ability, especially in vocabulary and comprehension, while their own institutions did little to improve the preparation of elementary teachers or teachers of English.

The matter of elective credits in reading was even more discouraging. Thirty-five per cent of the schools preparing elementary teachers, and 42 per cent of those preparing secondary teachers offered only three hours of training or less. This means that in three out of four schools only one course of three hours or less in the teaching of reading was available beyond the basic course.

While the representative from a new democracy in Asia waited, I pondered his request for a hundred reading specialists whom he wanted to take to Asia on a loan for a year at a high salary with all expenses paid. What should I tell him? He wanted these specialists to teach teachers how to teach children to read. We had just discussed a survey of the seventy-six institutions in Pennsylvania preparing teachers and the fact that there were fewer than twenty reading specialists in all of these institutions! Should I tell him

we couldn't spare even the seventeen specialists who were available in our state? Should I tell him that our state could export football coaches and football players? We might easily spare a hundred of them. I could hear him saying, "What kind of place is this—with only a few specialists in the teaching of the basic tool of their language?"

Our survey showed that seven out of ten of the counties of the Commonwealth were not interested in obtaining reading consultative service, while only four counties had a reading consultant or other staff member qualified for certification as a supervisor of reading.

This, then, was the deplorable state of reading instruction in 1957 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In January 1958, the governor called a conference on the improvement of instruction. Represented at the conference were many areas with varied interests. The conference was thus rather well balanced, and because of this balance could be expected to avoid lopsided, vested interest, "educationist" conclusions. Each conferee was asked to react to certain questions and to signify his reaction by checking in the Yes or No column.

Two hundred and ninety-one conferees (including school directors, legislators, lay people, government officials and jurists, private school personnel, county and district superintendents, public school teachers, curriculum specialists and guidance personnel, school principals, college instructors, college deans and depart-

ment heads, college presidents and administrators) recorded their reactions. There was 87 per cent agreement (in some cases 100 per cent) that instruction in reading should be made a specific part of the secondary program.

The State Council of Education on February 26, 1958, acted to extend reading instruction through grades seven and eight by requiring "a planned program of instruction in reading skills . . . in grades seven and eight for all students," beginning in September 1959.

As is shown in a recent survey, approximately 150,000 seventh and eighth grade children received instruction in reading during the first year of the program. This report shows further that one-half of the teachers concerned have had no formal preparation in reading during the first year of the program. Another displeasing condition is that of teacher load. The survey shows that 59 per cent of the teachers meet classes of more than twenty-four pupils; 24 per cent have classes numbering more than thirty-eight.

The problems incident to the implementation of extended instruction in reading are real and numerous, but they are not insurmountable.

It should be noted that the inclusion of reading instruction for all seventh- and eighth-grade pupils is not to be interpreted as an indictment of elementary reading teachers. Pennsylvania conceives of reading beyond grade six as an extension of skills and appreciations, not as primarily remedial. Doubtless many of

the secondary school teachers, particularly in English, had been giving instruction in reading, in some instances incidental, long before the state council mandate appeared. They helped children to find the main ideas, to evaluate them, to learn and practice techniques involved in word attack and recognition. Many teachers included definite units on vocabulary building. Among other things, they helped students to increase eye span, to avoid regressions, to skim, to read at speeds appropriate to different materials. The effective teacher did not need a state requirement, the ineffective one did.

Was Pennsylvania's program initiated too early? In the light of the deficient formal preparation of teachers, which I have mentioned earlier in this report, the question is legitimate. Naturally, one cannot discount lack of preparation. Doubtless fewer problems would have been present if teacher preparation had been better. If the reaction of administrators is a valid criterion, the requiring of reading instruction in grades seven and eight is desirable. It appears that the program was not initiated too early, in spite of the difficulties and handicaps.

What contribution can others than teachers of reading make to the program? Administrators can exert considerable influence in propagating the concept that every teacher has an obligation in the tool facet of his subject. In fact, the reading at the secondary school level can be designed as a how-to-study program.

The mathematics teacher should know the reading of mathematics, as should all subject matter teachers be conversant with the reading of their respective subject matter fields.

Guides should be established by the language arts teachers which can be used by teachers in all fields. These would identify and reinforce the techniques common to all areas. These techniques could then be expanded and used as a foundation on which to build techniques specific to the individual areas.

Publishers of textbooks have expended considerable energy in their attempts to be helpful to those who teach reading in the secondary school. Much of the material is extremely helpful if properly used, not as a crutch but as a supplement. There are many basic series, most of which are well prepared.

Administrators are also in a position to make an in-service contribution. A study is underway in Pennsylvania to discover what services are available through the colleges of the Commonwealth, both in facilities and personnel and on and off campus. This information will be disseminated, and the administrators can then assume the responsibility of expediting the program.

Pennsylvania's three-year curriculum study, which has recently been inaugurated, should furnish limitless opportunities for experimentation, since a major premise underlying the study is that there may be several good ways to accomplish a purpose, not only one; and that the plan best suited to local objectives should be

selected for local use. This study will involve all subject areas and will draw upon the best intellectual resources of the Commonwealth. Help for reading should be one of the products of the study.

The preliminary results of our 1960 state-wide test of Pennsylvania high school seniors reveals very satisfactory accomplishments generally, but in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and spelling our deficiencies in terms of national norms are unbelievably discouraging.

In vocabulary, instead of seventy-two students at the 99th percentile, Pennsylvania has only four. The local school should recognize the diagnostic value of these tests and use the results in planning an improved instructional program. The seniors who took this test were without the advantages of special instruction in reading in both the junior and senior high school. In 1963 a similar test should reveal the improvements accruing from the mandated reading program.

In spite of the handicaps which were encountered and the present weaknesses of the program, it is the reaction of this writer that a new day has dawned for the improvement of instruction in the Commonwealth, and that time alone can assess validly the action of the State Council of Education in extending reading instruction into grades seven and eight for all pupils.

*(As the title of this article has indicated, the author is Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.)*

## The Minnesota Requirements for Reading Teachers

by THEODORE CLYMER

FROM ITS BEGINNING, the Minnesota Reading Association (MRA) held one major objective: the improvement of the quality of reading instruction throughout the state. A variety of approaches was utilized by the Association in achieving this objective. At the MRA annual meetings, nationally recognized authorities presented research findings and indicated classroom applications growing out of this research; workshops and discussion groups were organized; a newsletter was published to carry information of significance to reading teachers; local councils were supported by the state organization.

Before long, it became apparent that one of the vital problems in improving instruction in reading was the need for recognition by the public and the profession that reading teachers and supervisors required special training, skills, and knowledge to qualify for their positions. Although a number of approaches were made to this problem, the appointment of a Legislative Committee by MRA was one of the most significant actions taken. The purpose of this committee was to inform the state legislative groups concerned with education of the need for reading teachers who were professionally prepared. In addition, the MRA Legislative Committee met with appropriate personnel in the State Department of Education to begin

discussions of certification requirements for reading teachers and specialists. These actions were part of a plan to try to obtain incentive state aid for school districts employing reading teachers, as is done in Minnesota for other types of special teachers, counselors, and school psychologists.

### Observations on Achieving Certification

The details of the machinery necessary to gain approval for certification requirements for reading teachers are not of interest to persons outside of Minnesota—for these procedures will vary from state to state. Several observations can be made, however, which might aid other state groups contemplating similar actions.

First of all, persistence and endurance were the major requirements of the committee as it worked toward acceptance of the special requirements for reading teachers. This statement in no way depreciates the interest of the legislative groups or the State Department in the need to have properly qualified persons in reading positions. Whenever decisions involve large numbers of people and committees representing various advisory and regulatory groups, the path is rough and progress is slow.

Second, the committee which drew up the recommended requirements for certification was appointed by

**STATE OF MINNESOTA REQUIREMENTS FOR  
READING TEACHERS AND READING SUPERVISORS**

| Type of Position                                    | Teaching Certificate Required | Teaching Experience Required                  | Degree Required | Courses Required      |                      |                       |                         |                      |                        |                           |                                   |                     |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
|   |                               |   |                 | Elem. Reading Methods | Sec. Reading Methods | Remedial Rdg. Methods | Individual Mental Tests | Practicum, Diagnosis | Practicum, Remediation | Survey of Excep. Children | Admin. and Supervision of Program | Additional Courses* |
| Elementary Remedial Reading Teacher                 | Elementary                    | 2 years                                       | Bachelor's      | x                     |                      | x                     | x                       | x                    | x                      |                           |                                   |                     |
| Secondary Developmental or Remedial Reading Teacher | Elementary or Secondary       | 2 years                                       | Bachelor's      | x                     | x                    | x                     | x                       | x                    | x                      |                           |                                   |                     |
| Reading Consultant, Supervisor, or Coordinator      | Elementary or Secondary       | 3 years, including one as a "reading" teacher | Master's        | x                     | x                    | x                     | x                       | x                    | x                      | x                         | x                                 | x                   |

\*Additional courses — not less than three from the following: language; educational research in reading or educational diagnosis; other learning difficulties, e.g., spelling, arithmetic; mental hygiene and/or personality; advanced psychological testing; principles and procedures in guidance; courses in special education; children's and/or adolescent literature.

the State Department of Education and was composed of representatives of teachers and administrators at all levels of the public schools, institutions training reading teachers, the State Department, and MRA. In this way a balanced viewpoint was achieved and all interested professional groups aided in the development of the requirements.

Third, and perhaps most important of all, energetic and resourceful persons devoted themselves to winning approval of the requirements for reading teachers. While many persons made valuable contributions, special recognition should be given to Victor Lohmann of St. Cloud State College, Leonard Martinetto of the Hopkins Public Schools, and Guy Bond of the University of Minnesota for their time, persistence, and persuasion in achieving approval of these certification standards.

### **The Minnesota Requirements**

The table summarizes the requirements for the three types of certificates. Several aspects of the requirements are worth emphasizing. Regular teaching certificates are required, and in all cases successful classroom experience is prerequisite to being certified as a reading teacher. In addition, specific courses must be taken which form the beginning training of any person occupying a position as a reading teacher. Of special importance are the practicum in diagnosis and the practicum in remediation. These requirements ensure that persons taking positions as reading teachers have been supervised in a practical

situation in which they learn about, and then carry through, programs of diagnosis and remediation.

At the reading consultant, supervisor, or coordinator level, the master's degree is required and three years of teaching experience are necessary, including one as a "reading" teacher. While only the bachelor's degree is required for the elementary remedial reading teacher and the secondary developmental or remedial teacher, in general practice many of these people are trained at the master's degree level. Many of the courses which are required for certification are available at the graduate level, and to achieve this training many teachers will have course work in excess of their bachelor's degree. Beginning with the school year 1963-1964, all persons holding positions as elementary reading teachers, secondary remedial reading teachers, secondary developmental reading teachers and reading consultants, supervisors and coordinators must meet the respective requirements for their positions. No provision has been made to exempt persons who now hold positions.

The new requirements for reading teachers in Minnesota should ensure that persons certified will have appropriate training and a good understanding of the teaching process as it relates to developmental and remedial reading.

*(Dr. Clymer is a Professor of Education at the University of Minnesota and Chairman of the Studies and Research Committee of IRA.)*

# The Professional Preparation of High School Teachers of Reading

by NILA BANTON SMITH

THE MOVEMENT to teach reading in high school is upon us. Not only is it here, but it is rapidly increasing both in volume and velocity. So let's face it! Let's take steps immediately to prepare high school teachers to take this responsibility, thus sparing the teachers, themselves, much worry and frustration and ensuring for high school students the best reading instruction that it is possible to provide.

## Preparation of Teachers in Service

First, we shall consider one of the most common situations, the one in which teachers in service are supposed to take on the job of teaching reading skills. More often than not the English teachers comprise this group, but in some cases it is suggested that all teachers in high school teach reading, which of course is highly desirable but not entirely practicable at the moment. Usually high school teachers, including English teachers, have had neither training nor experience in teaching the reading skills. Under these conditions many of them are quite unhappy at the prospect of teaching something that, as they say, they "know nothing about."

*Readiness activities.* In view of this all too common situation it is suggested that the first step in the professional preparation of high

school teachers for the teaching of reading might well be a series of "readiness" activities furthered on a cooperative basis within their own school system. If a reading consultant or supervisor has been appointed at the high school level, he or she will probably have the responsibility of organizing these activities. If not, the Administration will undoubtedly delegate much of this responsibility to personnel in the English Department.

The aims of the "readiness" activities should be: to develop acceptance of the philosophy that teaching reading is a responsibility of the high school teacher, to stimulate a desire to undertake this responsibility, and to provide a beginning knowledge, at least, in regard to practical methods of developing reading skills. Some school systems achieve these aims through such activities as the following:

1. Having faculty meetings in which reading test results are analyzed and studied, and needs are pointed out.
2. Having talks given by resource people in reading.
3. Forming committees to carry forward such activities as: (a) collecting and sharing articles, books, and courses of study which describe high school reading programs; (b) planning a program of observation to elementary and high school classrooms where reading is being taught

successfully; (c) having teachers in each department meet for committee activities, if all high school teachers are to be encouraged to teach reading. During such committee meetings, the teachers in each subject field may list special reading needs of their students, and then prepare a list of things that they think they might do to meet these needs.

4. Inviting those who are to teach reading to take reading courses or workshops of the type discussed below.

Many other readiness activities will evolve as interest develops and information increases.

*Foundation course.* The first reading course or workshop which high school teachers take is of the utmost significance in developing initial attitudes and establishing confidence. This course or workshop should be given by a person with a rich background of training and experience in the specialized field of reading. It is a mistake to give these teachers, whose needs are so great, an in-service course which is conducted by another teacher in the system who in turn may have taken a course somewhere else, and who now gives this course merely by recounting his or her notes without filling in with background information that a well-trained and experienced specialist who is accustomed to giving courses would have at his or her command.

The content of this first course should also be of a special type. Although it will have to be a graduate course if credit is given, it should be extremely practical and elementary.

The instructor must bear in mind that these high school teachers have no backlog of experience in the teaching of reading skills to draw upon. He needs to start "from scratch" and deal with basic skills and methods at the elementary level.

*Additional preparation.* It is advisable for high school teachers who are expected to teach reading to precede the actual teaching of reading skills with the readiness activities suggested above, including the foundation course in elementary methods. This course, however, should be succeeded by another foundation reading course at the high school level dealing with the more complicated skills and methods appropriate for high school students, and materials for use in developing these skills. This course may be taken as a part of the readiness activities or during the first semester in which teachers are expected to teach reading.

It is hoped, also, that high school teachers in service will become so interested in reading that they will continue to take selected courses.

If a reading consultant or supervisor is employed he or she will continue with teacher preparation and reading improvement activities such as visitations, demonstrations, individual and group conferences, preparation of helpful bulletins or mimeographed notes, talks by outside speakers, workshops, experimentation, et cetera.

### **Preparation of Special Reading Teachers**

There is a rapidly growing trend to employ a special teacher at the

high school level who devotes all of his or her time to diagnosing and teaching reading, either developmental or remedial, or both. Such teachers should have a master's degree and should be certified as specialists in their field. Their experience should embrace at least three years of successful teaching including experience in teaching reading.

The course preparation of such teachers should include several courses in reading. Course titles vary from one teacher-training institution to another, and content varies also. In the opinion of the writer, however, the substance of the courses below should constitute the course preparation of specialized reading teachers. The particular courses described represent a sequential program of teacher training in reading organized by the writer at New York University.\*

*Foundation Course in Teaching Reading at the Elementary Level.* The content of this course was described above.

*Foundation Course in Teaching Reading at the Secondary Level.* The content of this course was described above.

*Reading Laboratory Course in Diagnosis.* Lecture and discussion of diagnostic techniques accompanied by laboratory experience in diagnosing individual cases.

*Reading Laboratory Course in Correction.* Same as the diagnosis

\*The titles and explanations of courses are descriptive of content and are not the academic titles and course descriptions given in the New York University catalog.

course except that content and laboratory experience are concerned with correcting the reading difficulties of one or more students, individually.

*Practicum in Diagnosing and Teaching a Group.* In this course the student does laboratory work with a group rather than with an individual. Each student keeps a log of his diagnostic activities and teaching procedures. Each one works with his group before the class during one class session. Discussion and evaluation accompany log reports and demonstrations.

The special teacher of reading should supplement these reading courses with courses in such areas as developmental psychology for the adolescent, individual mental testing, mental hygiene, personality development, measurement and evaluation (to the extent that he or she can read research accounts with understanding). If a recent course in educational psychology has not been taken, then this is a *must*.

### **Preparation for Reading Consultants or Supervisors**

The reading consultant or supervisor should be certified on the basis of three or more years of successful teaching experience, including experience in teaching reading, and a master's degree, preferably a sixth-year certificate of a doctor's degree with specialization in reading. His or her courses should include all of those previously described plus additional courses of the nature indicated below:

*Seminar: Investigations in Read-*

ing. A thorough study, review and evaluation of significant research in the various aspects of reading instruction.

*Problems in the Organization and Supervision of Reading Improvement Programs.* A course dealing with the role of the reading consultant or supervisor in working with others in a public school system, techniques for working specifically with teaching personnel in the improvement of reading, problems in class organization, utilization of special services, evaluation of reading programs, criteria for selecting reading materials, possibilities for enlisting parent cooperation, methods of informing the public, etc.

As supplementary to all courses mentioned so far in this article, consultants or supervisors should broaden their background competence by taking at least one course in each of these areas: high school curriculum, counseling, interviewing, nature of language, literature for high school students, exceptional children. One or more courses in statistics and one in research design are highly desirable to the end that consultants or supervisors will not only be able to interpret test results and accounts of investigations to those with whom they work, but so that they also may be competent to stimulate, guide and direct reading research in the school systems with which they are associated.

### **Preparation for the Undergraduate Student**

Most undergraduate students now

in training for high school positions probably will be asked to teach reading before they have served for very many years as teachers in the public high schools. For this reason all students in training for high school teaching should be required to take at least two basic courses in reading: a practical methods course at the elementary level and a similar course at the high school level. (It is hoped that they will take other courses described in the sequence above, later as their teaching experience proceeds.)

Either in co-operation with their first courses in reading or as a part of their practice-teaching program it would be advisable for these young teachers-to-be to have many opportunities to observe master teachers at work in teaching reading. It would be helpful also if they might have opportunities to participate in small classroom activities related to reading instruction, such as: having individual children read orally while they take notes in regard to any difficulties; observing children read silently to note any undesirable habits, such as lip movement, head movement, finger pointing, or indications of visual difficulties such as squinting, holding the book too close or in a peculiar position; writing an anecdotal record of reading activities, achievements and needs of an excellent reader for a period of time; similarly, writing an anecdotal record of a poor reader; taking notes on children's individual interests as observed in their free choice of books; correcting teacher-prepared reading

material in which a written response is required; correcting tests or workbook exercises; preparing questions to be used while conducting the reading of a selection; preparing reading seatwork or informal tests to check different aspects of the reading process. Practical classroom orientation of this type is invaluable in the preparation of undergraduates who plan to teach in high school. It would be better still if they might have an opportunity to do some practice teaching of reading as a part of their practice teaching experience.

### Conclusion

The teaching of reading in the secondary school is a dire need and a thrilling challenge, but as it moves

into classrooms across the country it touts a host of problems in its wake. Many of these problems arise from the feeling of inadequacy high school teachers often experience because of their lack of preparation. High school teachers are very competent people on the whole. All they have to fear is fear. This is easily eradicated and the teaching of reading becomes a stimulating and enjoyable experience to them once the doors to the effective teaching of reading are unlocked. This we must do by providing them with the preparation that they need and deserve.

*(Dr. Smith is a Professor of Education and Director of the Reading Institute at New York University.)*

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## Research in Progress

### 1961 List Now Available

Members of IRA can secure copies of the annotated list of research projects now in process under the direction of members of the Association. Response to the invitation in the January number to list such projects was gratifying, and annotations have been prepared which list the name and address of the member and summarize the nature of the study.

This list will be issued annually if support for the project warrants it. If you are now engaged in reading research which has not yet been published, send a notice for inclusion in the 1962 list.

For your copy of the 1961 list send ten cents in coin or stamps to Agatha Townsend, R.D. 2, Kutztown, Pennsylvania.

## The Professional Preparation of College Teachers of Reading

by J. HARLAN SHORES

THOSE OF US who teach reading at the college level have received our training in a variety of patterns. Some of us were primarily students of psychology who became interested in the psychology of the reading process. Others of us entered through the child psychology or child development door; with a major interest in children we developed a specialization in this particular aspect of child growth and development. Others of us came the elementary education route. Through teaching reading in elementary schools we entered the area for graduate study. Still others of us began in the English language arts or as librarians.

Because so few of us—so very, very few of us—set out with our first course in college to become college teachers of reading we can't lean heavily on our personal experience when we consider what the optimum preparation might be for a college teacher of reading. We must instead rely upon our experience as college teachers of reading and ask ourselves what training and experience would best qualify a person for this job.

Before considering a possible program of preparation it might be well to have in mind a picture of the finished product. Engaging in the most extravagant kind of wishful thinking, what qualifications would the well prepared college teacher of reading have when he takes his col-

lege position on a full-time basis?

(1) He would, of course, be highly intelligent and personable. (2) He would be well grounded in a broad general education. (3) He would have a strong background in psychology and measurement. (4) He would be well prepared as an elementary school teacher and would have taught in a primary grade, as well as in a grade beyond the primary level. (5) He would have research interests and skills and would have done some research in the field of reading. (6) He would have a good knowledge of literature for children and adolescents. (7) He would be thoroughly prepared in the literature, research, and methods of both developmental and remedial reading. (8) He would have had experience as a reading supervisor or consultant. (9) He would have had experience in a reading clinic. (10) He would have college teaching experience in the field of reading. (11) He would be young when he entered college teaching to make possible a full career in his chosen field.

Obviously some of these qualifications are in competition with one another. How can he be broadly educated and yet highly specialized as both a teacher and a reading specialist? How can he be young and yet experienced? There are compromises to be made even in dreams,

and we must be prepared to make these compromises as we consider a possible program for his preparation.

Assuming an elementary and high school experience adequate for college entrance, let's look first at the college program. This probably should be a well planned five-year program leading to the master's degree. There are two important reasons for the five-year program rather than four with a fifth year added later. First, it will take five years to prepare this potential reading specialist for his first full-time position as a teacher in the elementary grades. And secondly, he won't get far with his specialization in the field of reading until he has had the master's degree and public school teaching experience, so the fifth year should be an integral part of a five-year sequence—not something planned separately as if the bachelor's degree were simply an admission card for graduate work.

The general education requirements of this five-year program would be the broad coverage of science, social science, English language arts, and fine and applied arts usually expected of elementary school teachers. This is important not only because the college teacher should be broadly educated, but because knowledge of the literature in a number of content fields is specialized preparation for the teacher of reading.

The first limit to the program of general education would come with the need to save college hours for psychology as a field of specialization. Whether the psychology courses

are offered in departments of psychology or education is more or less beside the point. However, it is important that this program include courses in child growth and development, the psychology of learning, mental health and hygiene, individual testing, group testing, statistics, and research methods. These courses are needed for the experiences of the five-year program and for later specialization in the field of reading.

A second limit to the number of hours devoted to general education is the need for professional courses preparing our prospective college teacher for his first teaching position in an elementary school. Recognizing that most aspects of this professional preparation are common to most teacher education programs it may suffice here to set forth briefly only the major specifications for such a program.

There would be observation and participation in elementary classrooms throughout the program. The professional courses, and especially the methods courses, would be organized in workshop-type blocks of courses housed in, or adjacent to, a curriculum materials center in order that the work in these courses could be organized around materials and practices as these exist in the best elementary schools.

Looking at the teacher-education program in perspective and in relation to programs preparing medical doctors, it is apparent that we educators could use a cadaver. Of course ours would have to be a group cadaver, but we do need experience

very close to the real thing and yet one in which errors are not costly in human consequences. Perhaps this is an area where new and better audio-visual aids offer hope. We need group learning situations that can be manipulated by prospective teachers. If these manipulations could elicit reactions from individuals and the group, we would have improved on the medical student's cadaver.

During the junior or senior years there would be full-time, on-the-job student teaching experiences at both primary and intermediate grade levels. Course work in child and adolescent literature would give equal emphasis to informational and fictional literature. Reading methods would recognize the distinction that should be made between the teaching of reading in the primary grades and the teaching of reading beyond the primary grades. Such instruction would also recognize the continuity that exists between these two concerns.

Recognizing the unbroken continuity of developmental reading programs and further recognizing the tremendous spread of individual differences within this continuous pattern, authorities in the field of reading have rightly warned against the dangers of oversimplification inherent in any concept of discreet stages of developmental reading. However, even with the recognition of these dangers, a functional analysis of the reading process indicates different concerns in the beginning reading program from those of the program beyond the primary grades.

This difference was noted earlier as one between learning to read and reading to learn. Since one continues to learn to read beyond the primary grades and also should read to learn during the primary grades, both parts of this distinction were bad.

Perhaps nearer to the heart of the difference is that our major concern in the primary grades is to teach the child to read something, with the material being less important than the process, for general and rather undifferentiated purposes. Beyond the primary grades emphasis is upon reading varied materials for specific and different purposes.

During a part of the fifth year the student would again be teaching in the public schools at a grade level of his own choice. However, the emphasis of this experience would be upon the research he will be doing in the field of reading. He would be collecting research data while teaching. Courses in measurement, statistics, and research methods should be linked to this field research experience in such a manner that he has guidance before, during, and after the time he spends teaching and collecting his data. Upon his return to the campus, while still enrolled in the supporting courses, he would analyze his data, report the findings to the public school where he worked, and write up his research for possible publication.

Also during the fifth year, but not during the research-oriented teaching experience, the student would get further preparation in graduate-level courses in the social and psycho-

logical foundations of education, and would take one graduate course each in developmental and remedial reading. Both of these reading courses would be taught with the needs of the classroom teacher, not the reading specialist, in mind.

His first teaching position would be in a self-contained first- or second-grade classroom. Most desirably, this experience would be in a well equipped and well staffed system. The first job is no place to learn how to get along with little or no help. And since prospective college teachers are few, perhaps we could afford this one unusually competent supervisory or consultant help.

He would hold this primary level position for only one year or two at the most. This is another of those unfortunate compromises. He can't become a master primary teacher in a year or two, and it is granted at once that he would learn more about teaching reading in the primary grades if he were to teach at this level for five or ten years. Still we must realize that he doesn't intend to be a primary teacher. He only needs to get the feel of this job as a part of his preparation. And we should remember too that he was unusually intelligent and well prepared when he took the position. He will do a better than average job from the start and will learn rapidly. While this short experience may deprive him of the fine points, he won't miss the more obvious ones.

He is now ready to move into intermediate grade teaching. He went to the primary grades first not

because it was easier to begin there, but because it had both logical and psychological advantages. He is progressing in his teaching as the child progresses with reading processes. Again this is a short experience—two years at the most. If he has only one year, this new experience should be different from his student teaching experience. If he did his practice in a departmentalized organization, teaching reading of course, this position should be in a self-contained classroom. If, on the other hand, his student teaching was in a self-contained classroom, he should teach reading and the related language arts in a departmentalized organization. In the latter instance this might mean that this second teaching position is in the seventh or eighth grade.

The shortness of this experience is just as deplorable as that in the primary grades. He can't become a master teacher at this level either. However, the same reasoning applies, and years saved at this time are invaluable when he is at the height of his college teaching career.

During these two to four years in the public schools our candidate should not have lost touch with his college advisors. They should have helped him in many ways while he was teaching. Now they have an assistantship for him in connection with the laboratory portion of the undergraduate methods block, including the teaching of reading. Whether he needs the financial aid of the assistantship isn't as important as his need for college teaching experience.

His doctoral program continues his preparation in psychology, education, and research methods. It also begins a two-track specialization in the field of reading. Recognizing at once that developmental and corrective reading programs are two sides of the same coin, there are two good reasons for making a distinction in course work along these lines. In the first place the combined field is too large. It needs splitting for ease of handling in separate courses. And the second reason is a justification for a split along developmental and remedial lines. Simply put, this reason is that there are positions in the public schools with each of these emphases and we are preparing our college teacher to educate reading teachers and specialists for each of these positions. The developmental reading program would include seminars in primary reading and in reading beyond the primary grades. Also in the developmental sequence would be a research seminar in which new theoretical and research developments are discussed and critically analyzed. Deviations from currently accepted practices such as the Sloop approach and the New Castle plan would be objects of study in this seminar.

As a part of the five-year program completed before his teaching experience, there was a course in remedial reading for the classroom teacher which emphasized the type of diagnoses and remediation that could be carried out, for the most part, in the classroom situation. At the doctoral level the real clinical preparation

begins. The first course of a three-semester sequence is devoted to diagnosis. During the second semester attention is given to remediation, and the third semester would consist of supervised field practice in the reading clinic. During the first two semesters individual cases would be diagnosed and treated, but the emphasis in these courses would be upon learning rather than practice. In each of these courses considerable attention would be given to the literature of clinical reading as well as to techniques of clinical operation.

Our candidate's first assistantship, for one year only, was in the methods block in the teaching of reading. In the second year beyond the masters he should be assisting in the reading clinic with rapidly increasing responsibilities for diagnosis, remediation, and administration of the program. During the third year while completing his doctoral dissertation he should be employed on a part-time basis as a reading specialist in a public school system. If his interests and thesis problem were in developmental reading he would work as a reading consultant. On the other hand, if his interests and thesis problem were more concerned with the clinical aspects he would spend this year in a reading clinic.

Upon completion of the doctorate he would apply for a college position in reading well prepared to handle either developmental or clinical responsibilities.

*(Dr. Shores is a Professor of Education, Elementary Division, at the University of Illinois.)*

## Handsome Is As Handsome Reads: Pointers on Evaluating Nonfiction for Children

by NANCY LARRICK

AS MORE and more children's books of nonfiction pour forth from the publishing houses, teachers and librarians are faced with the critical problem of evaluation and selection. Obviously we want books that are completely accurate as well as attractive looking. Introductory statements by distinguished Ph.D.s testify to authenticity, and almost without exception the books look beautiful.

But linger awhile to read, and you may want to paraphrase the old adage and say, "Handsome is as handsome reads." And some of them don't "read very handsome" despite their accuracy and pictorial beauty.

Again and again, I come across a book which is clearly a cut-and-paste job. Bits and pieces have been assembled with a paste-pot but without a continuing thread to hold the parts together. One page with its beautiful illustration generates little incentive to read on.

Or I find a book that has been "reduced"—one author's term for hurried rewriting of his adult book for juvenile readers. The magic of the adult book is gone; only the scaffolding remains.

These are extremes, of course, but they accentuate the need to evaluate the text of a book of nonfiction just as critically as we do fiction. Oddly enough, fiction has certain built-in tests which can't be ignored. There must be enough suspense to hold our

interest. Characters and situations must be so convincing that we willingly "suspend disbelief" and accept the web-writing of a spider as fact. If fiction meets these two tests, it is well on the way to winning young readers.

### The Text of Nonfiction

Although nonfiction has no characters and no plot, in the strict sense, it must hold the interest of children through the selection of content and the organization of material. One of the greatest difficulties in writing nonfiction for children is deciding what to include and what to omit. In the effort to reach young readers, some authors have played up the cherry-tree kind of anecdote and omitted significant events.

Others have meticulously recited chapter and verse, with such one-two-three mediocrity that they have failed to quicken the pulse of even one reader. It is a shoddy trick to overdramatize the events of history for children, and they are quick to sense this for what it is. On the other hand, youngsters today are used to the swift pace of news reporting and televised events. They like nonfiction that sweeps them immediately into the wonder of science or the drama of history. The book that gets off to a slow start is often abandoned.

In *Discoverers of the New World*, an American Heritage Junior Li-

brary Book, Josef Berger grips his reader with this first paragraph:

America was once the biggest secret on earth. The New World — the great belt of two continents hitched across the western half of the globe — is four times as large as Europe. Yet 500 years ago the greatest geographers in Europe did not know it existed.

This is straight-forward reporting, but it piques curiosity and encourages further reading.

Or consider Anne Terry White's opening paragraph in *Prehistoric America*, a Landmark Book:

High upon Mt. Tom in western Massachusetts there is a curious stone. It is a big granite boulder resting on a ledge of rock and looking for all the world as though some giant had picked it up and set it there. Anyone can see that boulder doesn't belong to the mountain. . . .

From the beginning Mrs. White holds a reader's attention with factual material. She gives exact details, but she manages to weave them into a tapestry that holds children fascinated. Somehow she is able to breath a sense of wonder into her simple explanation of difficult things.

Part of it is due to her selection of material and the sequence of her scenes. But much is due to the magic of language. For Anne Terry White uses a lyrical style that has grandeur when grandeur is needed, lightness where lightness is needed, even a folk quality when that is appropriate.

Try reading one of her books aloud and you will feel a rhythm that makes her simple sentences pleasing. In less talented hands such easy-to-read sentences are likely to seem jerky and childish.

I think the rhythmic language of a talented author is quickly noted by

a child, perhaps because he is used to a read-aloud pace himself. At least we know that his decision to read or not to read a book is often based on his sampling of the text.

### How Much Do Pictures Count?

He is not so easily influenced by the lavish illustrations as is the prospective adult purchaser. I can't recall one occasion when the lush colored illustrations persuaded a child to read and keep on reading.

Indeed, I think there may have been times when the illustrations in juvenile nonfiction distracted children from reading. In an expertly edited book the pictures entice the child into reading the text.

Watch a child as he pulls a book from the shelves and turns the pages. Immediately the pictures attract his attention. But frequently he is mystified. Who is doing what in this one? Where is this scene and what does it mean?

Probably the text answers these questions, but a child who is accustomed to the labels and explanation that accompany TV pictures feels let down. He likes the grownup satisfaction that Life Magazine gives its readers through well-captioned pictures.

Yet a surprising number of beautifully illustrated books of nonfiction for children have misleading captions or no captions at all. I recall one which reproduces an old map, so old that lines are blurred and place names are illegible. The caption explains the antiquity of the map, which is good, but it also refers to

place names that can't possibly be read. It would be natural for a young reader to assume that the text is just as confusing and therefore not for him. In this case, the caption is not a good sample of the book, but the browser has no way of knowing that.

Occasionally the caption and illustration are in conflict. For example, note the picture which shows a tree and its shadow, perhaps one and a half times as long as the tree is tall. But the caption states that the shadow is twice as long as the tree. Something is wrong, and the young reader is apt to shun the science book which includes this error.

When the picture is clear and meaningful, a child approves. But he is not won by illustrations that are merely decorative and richly colored. Nor is he interested in old maps, primitive paintings and early prints—authentic though they may be—unless they convey meaning directly.

### Children Demand More

In our zeal to provide children with information about stars and rockets and outer space or about explorations and discovery, we are apt to buy less critically than the children themselves. We leaf through the pages quickly and make a decision. If the book looks beautiful and if there is evidence that some authoritative person has written or checked the text, we buy. Children, I am glad to say, demand more.

If we would win their interest in reading, we would do well to use their critical approach in evaluating both text and illustrations.

*(With Nancy Larrick it's a case of handsome is and handsome does. She writes and lectures frequently about children's literature. She is now a resident of Quakertown, Pennsylvania.)*

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# The Professional Preparation of Reading Personnel in Nassau County

## *A Report of the 1960 Survey Committee of the Nassau, Long Island, Reading Council*

by MARY B. GILLES, RAYMOND PRESSMAN AND JAMES F. BURKE

NASSAU COUNTY, Long Island, has experienced a tremendous growth in school population during the past ten years. This growth has been accompanied by opportunities for specialized educational services in all areas. Due to this rapid expansion, the Nassau Reading Council felt a professional need to survey positions in the field of reading in the county.

In the winter of 1960 the Council, under the direction of President Dorothy M. Dietrich, asked all superintendents and district principals for the names of reading personnel working within their districts. (The term "reading personnel" is used throughout this article to denote all persons working in the field of reading.) A questionnaire was then sent to each of the 196 people named requesting information concerning job descriptions, responsibilities, working conditions, and qualifications of personnel involved.

To facilitate the handling of data, eight major categories were established from the 123 responses. These categories, with the number of respondents were as follows: Director and Supervisor (10), Coordinator of Reading (5), Reading Consultant (23), Reading Specialist (13), Remedial Reading Teacher (43), Reading Teacher (24), Helping

Teacher (3), and Language Arts Coordinator (2).\*

The full report of this survey includes such data as job responsibilities, organization of time, working conditions, materials used, and salary. In keeping with the theme of the current *READING TEACHER* only one area is explored in this article—that of the qualifications of reading personnel.

To clarify the relationship between qualification and type of reading position held, it must be stated that this survey dispels the common notion that the job title automatically denotes the nature of the responsibilities in the reading position. For example, one supervisor and three coordinators of reading reported that they spend three-fourths of their time teaching children, one reading teacher reported no time spent with children, and fifteen reading consultants reported working with children anywhere from half to full time. Therefore, in relating qualifications to the eight job titles listed, variations of job responsibility within each category must be considered. Information secured in the area of qualifications include degrees earned, graduate

\*The full committee report is available upon request. Readers may secure a copy by sending fifteen cents in coin to: James F. Burke, Chairman N.R.C. Survey Committee, 446 Division Avenue, Hicksville, New York.

reading courses taken, state certification, and teaching experience.

*Highest degree earned.* Approximately three-fourths of all respondents possess a degree above the bachelor's. About 11 per cent hold the professional diploma, and 6 per cent have earned a doctorate. Holders of the professional diploma seem to cut through all categories. Those possessing the doctorate are found in three categories: Director and Supervisor, Coordinator, and Reading Consultant. It appears that reading personnel working in Nassau County have been engaged in programs of advanced study in the field of education.

*Graduate reading courses taken.* Analysis of the data according to the standards suggested by the I. R. A. Committee on Professional Standards (noted elsewhere in this issue) shows that forty-six persons, over one-third of the respondents, had taken fewer than ten hours of graduate reading courses and do not meet the minimum requirements set up by the committee. It is apparent that reading personnel, although engaged in advanced study, did not necessarily take a major portion of their advanced work in the field of reading. (It may be noted, however, that thirty-seven persons had taken at least nineteen hours of graduate reading courses.)

*New York State certification.* New York State does not have a separate and distinct certificate for reading personnel, therefore, certifications for such persons has been obtained in the areas of teaching, supervision,

and/or administration. A total of 196 certificates is held by 123 respondents. It seems apparent that personnel in the field find it necessary to acquire varied certification in order to qualify for their positions. Elementary certificates are held by the greatest number (91); other common certificates are for high school (37) and for elementary supervision (26).

*Classroom teaching experience.* More than one-fourth of all respondents reported less than four years' classroom experience, one-fourth reported less than seven years' experience, about one-fifth had from seven to nine years' experience, and the balance of the respondents varied from ten years' to thirty-one years' classroom teaching experience. There were no appreciable differences in years of experience shown among the various categories. Considering the fact that more than half of the respondents (sixty-six) have less than seven years' teaching experience, it appears that many teachers enter the reading field after a few years in the classroom.

*Experience in the field of reading.* Since three years is considered a probationary period for new positions in the State of New York, one-half of the respondents (sixty-two) must be regarded as newcomers to the field of reading. Of these sixty-two respondents, twenty-four have only one year's experience. More than one-fourth of the respondents had four to nine years' experience in reading, while about one-sixth had more than ten years' experience. Therefore, it

appears that reading positions in Nassau County are filled with persons relatively new to the field.

*How position was obtained.* Although not directly related to the topic of professional preparation, the matter of how reading positions were obtained raises questions about the background of reading personnel and the employment practices of school districts. More than half of the respondents (sixty-seven) obtained their positions as promotions within their school systems, while approximately one-sixth (seventeen) obtained their positions through college or university placement bureaus. Commercial placement bureaus accounted for eleven placements, and word of mouth accounted for fourteen. The college or university bureau has traditionally been regarded as the agency for professional placement, particularly in specialized fields, yet we find only a small percentage of Nassau County personnel securing their positions through these bureaus.

The findings are truly significant when one considers the abundance of colleges and universities within the New York metropolitan area which offer graduate work in reading.

It is this discrepancy which raises the question of the professional preparation of reading personnel who have been promoted within their school systems. Considering the meager contribution of college and university placement bureaus with the lack of certification in New York State, and the quality of graduate work taken by the respondents

(which indicated that one-third were not meeting minimal standards), the implication appears to be that promotions within school systems do not guarantee properly qualified personnel for reading positions. To illustrate, the categories of Remedial Reading Teacher and Reading Teacher were cross checked for a comparison of hours taken in graduate reading courses with promotions within school systems. Of the sixty-seven respondents in the two categories, forty-five were promoted within their systems. Of the forty-five, thirty-six did not meet minimal requirements as suggested by the Committee on Professional Standards.

### Summary

The survey of the Nassau Reading Council disclosed many interrelated factors with respect to the professional preparation of reading personnel within Nassau County.

1. The data collected indicate the existence of many positions in Nassau County. In addition to the quantity of personnel (196 names secured) there is much evidence as to the variety of positions as indicated by job titles. However, the relationship of job title to responsibilities performed is not synonymous. This substantiates findings in previous studies by Dever and Robinson.\*

\*Imogene K. Dever, *Positions in the Field of Reading*, Teachers College Studies in Education (Bureau of Publications, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1956). H. Alan Robinson, "An Occupational Survey of Reading Specialists in Junior and Senior High Schools." Unpublished doctoral dissertation (New York University, 1957).

2. There is a lack of graduate preparation in reading on the part of many of the respondents. Such factors as the newness of the position, promotions from within school systems, and absence of state certification requirements in reading may have a bearing on this lack of preparation.

3. Since New York State does not have certification requirements for reading personnel, confusion seems to exist in this area. Local districts set their own standards, utilize any available personnel, and establish job titles not consistent with job functions.

4. Many reading positions are filled by persons having a limited experience in classroom teaching. Considering the probationary period for new positions, they are also new in the field of reading.

5. Finally, the practice of promotion from within the school system encourages the use of poorly qualified personnel throughout the county. The Survey Committee feels that teachers do not find it necessary to be fully prepared before assuming the responsibility of a reading position. Similarly, those responsible for staffing reading positions do not seem aware of, or disregard, minimum standards for qualified reading personnel.

*(The authors of this report are all reading consultants in Hicksville, New York: James F. Burke in the secondary area and Mary Gilles and Raymond Pressman in the elementary area. They have all also taken graduate work at Columbia University.)*

### IRA Professional Standards

The Professional Standards Committee of IRA has for the past three years been working to develop a set of standards for the reading profession. The results, *Minimum Standards for Professional Training of Reading Specialists* and a *Code of Ethics*, have been printed in brochure form. The committee, with the cooperation of local organizational chairmen, is distributing some seven thousand copies to teacher-training institutions, governmental departments of education, certifying agencies, etc.

IRA members may obtain copies by sending a large (9 x 4), self-addressed, stamped envelope to the chairman:

Dr. Charles T. Letson, Director  
Reading Consultant Services  
315 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut

# A Note on Reading and Closure

by BERJ HAROOTUNIAN

VARIOUS WRITERS have commented on the similarity between the processes involved in reading and closure. This paper reports the results of a study of the relationships between reading grade equivalent scores on the Iowa Every Pupil Tests of Basic Skills and three closure tests adapted by Thurstone. The closure tests are Mutilated Words, Incomplete Pictures, and Concealed Figures; the first two tests are designed to measure the factor identified as speed of closure, the last, flexibility of closure.

The subjects were 208 seventh- and eighth-grade boys and girls whose median I.Q. was about 113 with decile deviation from 97 to 128. The subjects were administered the tests as part of a study of good and poor problem solvers.\* Their performance is described in Table 1. The coefficients of correlation between the variables are in Table 2.

It is noteworthy that the coefficients between the tests measuring speed of closure and reading are not significant at the .01 level. It would appear that by the junior high school years speed of closure, as measured, is not an important factor in reading achievement.

It is interesting to speculate why Concealed Figures had the highest relationship to reading performance.

\*M. W. Tate, Barbara Stanier, and B. Harootunian, "Differences Between Good and Poor Problem-Solvers," University of Pennsylvania, 1959.

The difference between the coefficient in this case and those for the

TABLE 1  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Reliability Coefficients for Tests of Closure and Reading

| Variable                 | Mean | Standard Deviation | Reliab. Coeff.* |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Mutilated Words          | 18.4 | 5.8                | .88             |
| Incomplete Pictures      | 16.6 | 3.7                | .71             |
| Concealed Figures        | 45.1 | 9.6                | .88             |
| Reading Grade Equivalent | 8.9  | 1.4                | —               |

\*Estimated from half test scores stepped up.

TABLE 2  
Coefficients of Correlation Between the Variables

| Variable               | 2    | 3    | 4     |
|------------------------|------|------|-------|
| 1. Mutilated Words     | .360 | .179 | .158* |
| 2. Incomplete Pictures |      | .211 | .111* |
| 3. Concealed Figures   |      |      | .389  |
| 4. Reading             |      |      |       |

\*Not significant at .01 level; all other coefficients significant with  $p < .01$ .

speed of closure and reading tests are highly significant. One explanation might be that flexibility of

closure, as measured by Concealed Figures, elicits abilities of a higher order, abilities such as planning ahead, breaking the whole into its parts, seeing the relationships between the parts, reorganizing patterns, etc. This explanation would be in line with those which regard read-

ing and thinking as essentially similar processes.

*(Dr. Harootunian is an Assistant Professor of Education at the University of Delaware. He has special interests in the field of measurement.)*

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Many months ago the IRA headquarters provided through the generosity of the University of Chicago became too small. A diligent search for adequate space led in March to a three-room suite for the central office. Located on the seventh floor

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# What RESEARCH Says to the Reading Teacher

BY

**AGATHA TOWNSEND**

*Consultant, Educational Records Bureau*

## Building Critical Reading

"Is it true? How can we tell? What else do we know that might help us tell whether or not it is true?" These are only a few typical questions which represent methods of introducing critical reading. They deal with content. Other questions deal with the accuracy of rendition. The second grader reads, "The giraffe has a wrong neck," laughs and corrects himself. A high school student compares an editorial about missiles with a news release on the same topic. How do the purposes of writing affect the statements which are made?

Building the ability to read critically has long been recognized as one of the aims of college reading. Testimony to this effect and a description of the type of reading required are furnished in statements of many college teachers who do not regard themselves as primarily teachers of reading. For example, the following quotation comes from a book whose primary aim is to describe a new college curriculum and to discuss cross-divisional courses. "The student is not asked to prepare a summary of the facts or of the arguments in the readings. Instead he is expected to express at least a tentative conclusion on the problem

and to defend the point of view adopted. In doing this he is encouraged to show an awareness of his assumptions, to deal with essential matters of definition, to weigh alternative solutions and to reason logically to his conclusions."\*

Both the late Elona Socher in her study of the nature of critical reading (13) and Artley in his examination of references on critical reading in the content areas (1) have emphasized how intricately related are the comprehension and thinking skills required of the reader. Definitions of critical reading abound, and they vary widely. They do tend to agree, however, that the active participation of the reader, his ability to look at his own thinking and reacting as well as his ability to understand what the author says and what he intends to say, make critical reading an undertaking which demands the highest degree of self-awareness and self-criticism.

The personal characteristics of the reader, then, as well as his sophistication in the mechanics of reading will determine the outcome of his attempts to read critically. The teacher who is interested in this aspect of the field might well start by consulting

\*Gail Kennedy, ed., *Education at Amherst* (New York: Harper, 1955), p. 225.

the critical review of research published by Eller and Dykstra (4), who emphasize the "reader-predisposition factor" as it is related to personal, social, and cultural background and experience. This summary is of special help in setting the stage for the study of several new attempts to describe and explore just what does go on when the reader interprets a selection.

Four experimental projects may be cited to illustrate these attempts. All have their basis in the study of the news article *versus* the reader. Engel, O'Shea, and Mendenhall (5) tentatively classified a large number of college and adult readers according to their "commitment in the area covered by the material," and studied their reactions to "ambiguous" reading matter. A considerable degree of "projection" of the reader's bias could be discerned in the interpretation, and the authors speculated that not only description but some control of reader predisposition was possible. A study by Mehling (9) provides a follow-up of this last idea. He compared the effectiveness of combining pictures and captions with the impact of a news story alone in changing the personal attitudes of university students. Kerrick (6) also studied news pictures and captions to explore the effect on "meaning" assigned to them by college women. An even more direct attempt to control the factors of interpretation was made by Carter (3), who conducted a controlled experiment with high school, college, and adult groups to

determine the effect of different methods of structuring news stories on controversial subjects. Accurate comprehension was improved by using neutral orientation for the lead paragraphs, giving equal presentation of conflicting points of view, and divorcing issues from the names of proponents involved.

Fiction as well as news has been used as an experimental vehicle. Two studies which seem to merit special attention have been conducted by Thayer and Pronko (14, 15). The earlier of the two dealt most interestingly with the tendency of college students to impute quite definite personality "profiles" to fictional characters not directly described in a text. The second study bears an even closer relation to the newspaper research summarized above; it tested the effect of ascribing fiction to various magazine sources, and found that the readers responded to the stories according to their idea or opinion of the magazine or sort of magazine presumably represented. Both articles stress the basic importance of the experience which the reader brings to the page.

Let us agree that these studies deal with older readers, whose experience includes, among many other things, at least basic instruction on general reading and interpretation skills. How has this instruction affected the critical reading ability shown? Betts (2) concludes that much elementary school instruction is glaringly inefficient in producing the higher-level reading and thinking skills required for critical reading, and he points

out appropriately enough that general reading tests are not testing these skills. The conclusion may be reached that if such skills are not measured, deficiencies in them will not be repaired. Lampard (7) found instruction in critical reading was needed by college students and adults.

It should be remarked that not all tests avoid measurement in this area. Experiments with fifth-grade pupils by Maney (8) and Socher (12) suggest that it may eventually be possible to measure critical reading in science and social studies, and to determine to what extent critical reading calls on general reading and intellectual abilities, and to what extent it can be identified as a separate factor or ability.

Unfortunately, however, the last two or three years have produced very few research reports dealing with the teaching of children, so that critical reading can scarcely yet be said to have a developmental history for most school children. Two reports are available which deal with sixth-grade classrooms. Nardelli's (10) study of creative aspects of reading examined the possibility of directly training pupils to deal with authors' purposes and with readily identified propaganda devices. He was optimistic about the value of such direct teaching. Pickarz (11) in her sixth-grade classroom examined one passage and its use for eliciting responses to questions about author intent and evaluating bias. Two brief case studies accompany her summary of class performance.

What is, at present, the contribution of the basic reader series to the development of critical reading? Williams (18) listed an impressive number of critical reading skills emphasized in ten prominent series of readers, but she found that there was a great deal of difference among the series in the abilities and situations stressed (only three were common to all series), and that few series proved adequate for the aim of introducing such skills from the very beginning and providing for their systematic development through the grades.

It seems possible to draw several general conclusions from the studies reviewed. So far as one can determine, lip service, at any rate, is paid to the importance of critical reading for all readers, juvenile and adult. The most unequivocal mention of the ability and demand for it comes from writers dealing with college and adult readers. Its description is allied with research in propaganda, personal stereotype and bias, and the interpretation of news in controversial areas. Such research is a logical result of identifying critical reading as a high type of thinking and reacting to the printed page. But in spite of the importance given to the ability in the years that follow elementary and secondary schooling, we lack, and we badly need, the research basis for building it into the developmental reading program.

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## What Other Magazines Say About READING

BY

**MURIEL POTTER LANGMAN**

*Eastern Michigan University and Hawthorn Center, Northville, Michigan*

COPE, IDA LEE. "Teaching Reading in Samoa." *NEA Journal*, January, 1961.

It is wholesome, occasionally, to consider some of the conditions and problems facing teachers outside the United States. This short article is the report of a project in teaching elementary reading to children whose native language is not English, through the supervision of teachers whose first language is not English, in an area where the official language is English. There is an almost total absence of materials and equipment as well. Yet, somehow, the teaching gets done.

CLARK, MAMIE P. and KARP, JEANNE. "A Summer Remedial Program." *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 3, December, 1960.

This article describes and evaluates results of five successive summer programs carried on in a private, nonprofit child guidance clinic. Ages of children ranged from eight to eighteen, and amounts of gain were varied. The average gain over a one-month period of intensive work in reading (a few were also given arithmetic help) was almost a year. Those children who were least retarded in reading, and those who had the higher intelligence quotients made the greatest gains. Eight children did not improve.

The writers point out that the rate of gain in this summer program was greater than that in the school year program also carried on by the clinic. They attribute the success of the children to their being free of the frustrating experiences of the classroom, to the efforts of a selected staff of highly qualified, experienced remedial therapists, and the intensive work possible under the time limitation.

NEVILLE, DONALD. "Comparison of WISC Patterns of Male Retarded and Non-retarded Readers." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 54, No. 5, January, 1961.

For those interested in using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children as a diagnostic instrument in reading disability, this study will be of special interest. The investigator agrees with findings in previous studies in which retarded readers scored higher on the performance section of the scale. In the verbal section poor readers obtained significantly lower scores in information, arithmetic, and digit span; their highest scores were in picture arrangement and block design. The low scores were in areas seemingly related to scholastic learning, while the high ones were obtained from items which did not appear directly related to formal learning. The subjects were

thirty-five pairs of children matched for I.Q., sex, and grade level. All subjects had I.Q.s of 90 or above, and were two or more years below grade level in reading achievement.

GROFF, P. J. "Materials for Individualized Reading." *Elementary English*, Vol 38, No. 1, January, 1961.

This excellent article is a useful one to put into the hands of people who are interested in trying to teach reading by individualizing. Its scope is far broader than the title indicates, for there are many suggestions for those who feel the need of specific guidance. There is realistic stress on the fact that variety of materials is an essential factor in the success of this type of instruction. (Of course it never hurt other types of programs either.) There is an excellent bibliography.

GROFF, PATRICK. "Recent Easy Books for First Graders." *Elementary English*, Vol. 37, No. 8, Dec., 1960.

This is a list of hundreds of recent titles. It should be a great help to teachers who know the importance of encouraging children to read independently from the very beginning.

WITTY, PAUL, and ASSOCIATES. "Studies of Children's Interests—A Brief Summary." *Elementary English*, Vol. 38, No. 1, January, 1961.

This article is a fine starting point for more intensive work on a perennially important topic. I shall be delighted to point it out to my graduate students. There is a good bibliography, including some early but important references.

SHORES, J. HARLAN. "Reading Science Materials for Two Distinct Purposes." *Elementary English*, Vol. 37, No. 8, December, 1960.

Dr. Shores' solid articles dealing with relationships between the reading-thinking process and comprehension in subject-matter areas are always immensely interesting. This one first surveys the literature on the relationship between reading purposes and comprehension, then describes a new study in which two matched groups read the same standardized materials, but in which each group was given different directions related to purposes for reading. One group was instructed to read for the main idea, while the other was to read to hold in sequence all the ideas in the same passage. Some unpublished tests by the experimenter were also used with both groups.

Among the conclusions drawn from the performance of the two groups were: Good readers tend to be good readers even when the directions given them are varied. The purpose of the reader influences the speed with which he reads; faster readers comprehended better than slower readers on the Iowa Silent Reading Test, but they did not comprehend better on the expository science materials used in the study. Those who read more slowly scored better on keeping the sequence of ideas in mind. Speed and comprehension scores from a general reading test are not necessarily good predictors of speed and comprehension in reading content areas; they predict success in reading for main ideas better than for holding a sequence of ideas. The purpose of reading for main ideas is more effective in science achievement than is the purpose of reading for a sequence of ideas.

The purpose of reading for main

ideas was more highly correlated with scores on the California Test of Mental Maturity, non-language section, than were the scores for holding the sequence of ideas. The reader's purpose is a more powerful determinant of both reading speed and reading comprehension with expository material than is the type of material being read.

BLOOMER, RICHARD H. "Concepts of Meaning and the Reading and Spelling Difficulty of Words." *Journal of Educational Research*, Vol. 54, No. 5, January, 1961.

After briefly reviewing pertinent literature, and presenting some assumptions underlying our thinking about learning to spell words, the experimenter designed a complex study of relationships as presented by his title. The description of the study method is highly compressed, and I was unable to find any statement about the participating subjects, but the findings and implications presented are so challenging that it would be interesting to see a fuller presentation. For example, frequency of occurrence of words is highly related to both spelling difficulty and reading difficulty. The more familiar a word (the more sense experience is associated with it) the more meaning it will transmit. Reading instruction will be more effective in proportion as greater emphasis is placed upon words which have specific or concrete meanings, and also if greater emphasis is given to making these words meaningful to children.

Since concreteness was found to be related to reading difficulty but not to spelling difficulty, the results are believed to indicate a difference in the

demands of the reading and spelling processes.

FLESCH, RUDOLPH. "How to Be a Perfect Speller." *Saturday Review*, January 14, 1961.

Everyone may have his own system, and Dr. Flesch's is, unexpectedly, not related to his previously expressed reliance on phonics. If phonics can teach one to read, I should somehow expect it also to teach one to spell, but Dr. F. has observed, like the rest of us, that spelling rules for English are as sadly unreliable as pronunciation rules, and beyond presenting a few common generalizations about letter sequences, he recommends an elaborate system of associating sentences or phrases as clues to remembering the correct spelling of those "demons." It wouldn't work for me, but it does for him!

TEMPLIN, ELAINE M. "How Important Is Handwriting Today?" *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 3, December, 1960.

This study of the uses of handwriting by adults, with respect to amounts per week, purposes, type of writing and even type of writing implement, emphasizes the fact that legible handwriting is still a useful and frequently employed skill. It is certainly time for a revival of interest in this aspect of the language arts, if the quality of handwriting my students offer on their papers is any indication. When the typewriters have been reduced to the size of transistor radios, it will be time to abandon interest in legibility and facility in handwriting. And not until then.

GROFF, PATRICK J. "From Manuscript to Cursive—Why?" *Elementary*

*School Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 2, November, 1960.

The experimenter first reviews a number of studies of the relative efficiency of the two modes of handwriting, then summarizes the results of a study of his own. Sixty-one directors of elementary education were asked to give their reasons for changing from manuscript writing to cursive. The reason most generally offered was the pressure of tradition—cited by 92 per cent of the respondents; 62 per cent said the change was demanded by society. Twenty-four different reasons were given, a good many of them open to discussion, in my opinion. Worth while considering.

HUNT, LYMAN C. "Teaching Reading by Television." *Education*, Vol. 81, No. 2, October, 1960.

This article describes the plan for

an extensive study intended to examine the effectiveness of a series of television programs on reading instruction in the elementary school. Nineteen half-hour programs were presented by teachers from local schools, telecast from a local commercial station. Each program was a demonstration, the teacher using children from her own class and illustrating some phase of her program.

The writer also reviews carefully the functions of teachers in face-to-face reading instruction, developing the criteria for good teaching. The study, however, is planned to assess the role of the teacher in the area of educational television, not so much, it appears, in the education of children, but in the improvement of instruction and in public relations between school and community.

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## KEYSTONE TACHISTOSCOPIC SERVICES

## Interesting BOOKS for the Reading Teacher

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**HARRY T. HAHN**

*Oakland County Schools, Michigan*

### **A Reading Program for the Mature Student**

ROSS, RALPH, BERRYMAN, JOHN, and TATE, ALLEN. *The Arts of Reading*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1960. Pp. 448. \$5.25.

As evidenced by several recent articles in educational journals, it is being increasingly realized that reading instruction in the elementary school, however excellent, is not sufficient to enable secondary school and college students to function at their best in advanced work. Further training, in no sense remedial, is necessary to develop the new skills required for mastering material in philosophy, psychology, social studies, and literature.

The value of an advanced developmental reading program for the mature student is apparent when we pick up such a book as *The Arts of Reading*, which has been prepared with the same fine scholarship which specialists on the elementary level have brought to the analysis of the reading process.

Assuming full mastery of the skills involved, the authors offer instruction in the arts of reading, through a selection of passages which begins with Emerson's "hobgoblin of foolish consistency," and ends with a one-act play by Chekhov. Along the way they deal with the writings, among many others,

of Epictetus, Shakespeare, Freud, Hitler, and Hemingway.

Following each selection, they provide a commentary illustrating the type of intensive reading which produces true understanding and stimulates creative thinking. For each passage there is also a summary of terms and principles together with further questions for discussion.

This is a book which can be used in orientation courses for college students of high calibre. It also offers many teaching ideas for college instructors in the various departments, and for high school teachers fortunate enough to be assigned to classes of gifted students. In fact, since the book carries the whole language approach of the elementary schools to the university level, it could be used to improve, not only reading ability, but also speaking and writing skills.—RUTH ANNE KOREY, *Brooklyn, New York*

### **For Teachers and Laymen**

TRIGGS, FRANCES ORLIND. *Reading: Its Creative Teaching and Testing, Kindergarten through College*. Privately printed by the author, Kingscote, Apt. 3G, 419 W. 119, New York 27. \$5.00. Pp. 150.

In the words of the author as stated in the introduction, "This book is not

like any other textbook on the teaching of reading. It is more an explanation of what can be done than a review of research—though supporting research will be cited. It is written for teachers and laymen, not for technically trained clinicians and remedial teachers."

Many of the persistent and difficult problems of concern to all individuals interested in the teaching of reading are discussed in nontechnical language in this paper-bound book. Transcripts of classroom lessons, charts, space outlines, and many concrete examples suggest ways to solve these problems as a part of regular classroom instruction.

The need to develop a strong, coordinated, testing program is stressed throughout the book. Many tests are listed for use in classroom instruction, but the ones chosen by the author for a detailed description are the *Diagnostic Reading Tests*, published by The Committee on Diagnostic Reading Tests, Inc. These tests are an integral part of the teaching methods described in the book.

The kindergarten through college approach and the program of instruction in basic skills should prove interesting to all teachers of reading.—

JEAN F. HAMILTON, *Wayne State University*

### A Guide for Parents

JOHNSON, ERIC W. *How to Live Through Junior High School*. New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1959. Pp. 288. \$3.95.

Last year your editor somehow overlooked this meaty guide to understanding the problems of young people attending our junior high schools. It

is time to make amends. Eric Johnson with a deft pen and a light touch probes the nerve center of a very sensitive area of our school program. The text should enlighten and interest parents and inform teachers. His suggestions regarding homework, study habits, reading skills, grades, parties, boy and girl relationships, money, chores, and related topics are sound and practical. What is more they are invariably punctuated with a fine sense of humor.

### Habitat for Optimum Learning

SNYDER, EDITH ROACH, Editor. *The Self-Contained Classroom*. Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1960. Pp. 88. \$1.25.

It is time to take a second look at the self-contained classroom in light of the publicity being given to team teaching, unique grouping practices, and other organizational devices. This booklet will help you in your appraisal. Dr. Snyder shows why "the self-contained classroom provides a habitat for enriching pupil's learning experiences." She is supported by seven contributors who share her belief that the self-contained classroom nurtures optimum learning and living conditions for each boy and girl.

### A Local IRA Council Reports

CHICAGO AREA READING ASSOCIATION of the International Reading Association. *Developmental Reading in the Content Areas*. Report of the Proceedings of the 1960 Spring Conference. Chicago: Miss Mary Zwickstra, CARA Treasurer, Bureau of

Child Study, 228 LaSalle Street, 1960. Pp. 52. \$1.00.

Paul Witty's interesting keynote address to the conference is the highlight of this report. It is followed by detailed summaries of small group meetings in specific content areas. This is a model of the way an ambitious IRA council can effectively share ideas on promising teaching practices.

### **Evaluation of Reading Instruction**

NELSON, HENRY B., Editor. *Development In and Through Reading*. The Sixtieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. Chicago: The National Society for the Study of Education, 1961. Pp. 406. \$4.50.

Paul A. Witty, chairman of this yearbook committee, and a host of distinguished educators deserve our heartiest congratulations and warmest praise for this scholarly and thought-provoking publication. The materials presented are certain to extend our knowledge and appreciation of sound reading programs, preschool through college, and to arouse once more our concern for the effects of reading upon the personal and social development of the individual. Teachers and administrators who give this concise, timely and critical study of current instructional practices sober and thoughtful reflection are certain to find a sound base for the improvement of reading programs.

Despite the broad coverage of the topics treated, the committee ably organized the contents to provide splendid continuity and revealing insights. The report opens with the

nature of reading development, considers factors and conditions influencing reading, examines critically materials for instruction, encourages the sequential development of reading, and closes with a review of remedial reading practices and ways of evaluating growth of the individual student.

Throughout this text, there is ample support for the proposal by the late William S. Gray that the "need is urgent to radically upgrade the preparation of teachers in reading." This upgrading should start with teacher preparation but be continuous in pre-service and in-service programs. In their treatment of "Basal Instructional Materials in Reading," Herrick, Anderson, and Pierstorff identify the limitations of current materials and suggest areas for improvement. However, they also indicate that there is a greater need to improve teaching method and over-all instructional planning for reading development. They suggest that it is "likely that the quality of our materials has outstripped the quality of our teaching and curriculum planning. The quality of any reading material depends on the quality of its use." A step towards quality teaching can start with a perusal and discussion of the ideas in this text.

Those who plan to attend the Sixth Annual International Reading Association Conference in St. Louis will have an opportunity to hear a discussion of "The Values of the Yearbook" under the leadership of Paul Witty.

### **Films for High School Students**

HARRIS, THEODORE L., Educational Collaborator. *Reading Improvement*

*Film Series.* Chicago: Coronet Films, 1960. Each film is eleven minutes in length, \$110.00 in full color or \$60.00 in black and white.

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Films cannot take the place of books in a reading program. However, films can provide assistance to the teacher in focusing attention upon the skills to be taught, arousing interest and enthusiasm for materials presented, and in providing models which young people can emulate. This is particularly true if the contrived dramatic situations are

minimized so that most of the attention is given to the purposes of the film. It is also important that the dress, manners, and appearance of the young people, as well as their surrounding environment in the films, be familiar and acceptable.

These new Coronet films introduce elements of a sound reading improvement program at the secondary school level and have all the qualifications noted above. Practical and useful suggestions are given to students appropriate to the title of each film. It was apparent during the preview that the titles could be used in sequence or individually. In this reviewer's opinion, the films are worthy of consideration, particularly in a high school English or developmental reading program.

### Teach vocabulary more easily with these

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### Modern Classics

*Publishers' Weekly* polled librarians, reviewers, and booksellers to find which books they considered classics among books published for children in the last three decades. The three top selections were *Charlotte's Web*, by E. B. White; *Mary Poppins*, by P. L. Travers; and *The Little House in the Big Woods*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Does anyone want to argue with their choices?

### Authors

If your readers revel in the Dr. Seuss books, Beginner Books or others, be sure to read "Children's Friend," a *New Yorker* Profile in the issue of December 17, 1960, pages 47-93. The article is by E. J. Kahn, Jr., and should be available at your public library. You will read primarily for pure pleasure, but be sure to tell the children about the location of Mr. Geisel's house, what his workroom looks like, and how insistent he is that his books measure up to his high standards.

Lewis Nichols, in the *New York Times Book Review* (December 25, 1960) reports that Augusta Stevenson's twenty-fifth book in the Childhood of Famous Americans is shortly to be published. She started the first book in the series when, at the age of sixty, she retired from the Indianapolis schools. Total sales in the series

have reached 1,750,000 copies. None has sold less than 50,000 copies.

### Reading Clinics

The 1961 edition of *Directory of Reading Clinics* is available this spring. If your clinic is not included, and you would like it to be, write for information to Helen Frackenpohl, Educational Developmental Laboratories, 75 Prospect, Huntingdon, New York.

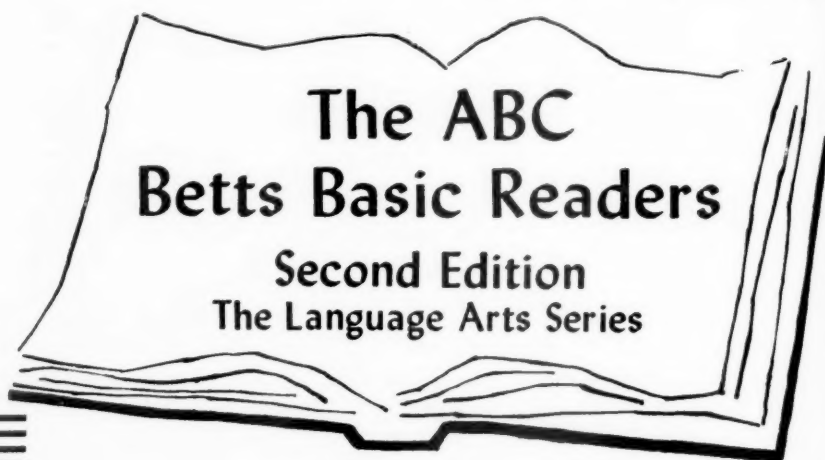
### School Stores

Have you thought about establishing a bookstore in your high school? People, we know, are more likely to read if books are easily available. Isn't it probable that more people would buy books to have for their own, and to give as gifts, too, if there were convenient places to buy? Nancy Larrick discusses school bookstores in "'When You Buy a Book You Read It,'" in *Junior Libraries*, 7 (January 1961), 26-27. It's a short article, but it should have long-term effects.

### Space Literature

First the younger generation discovered Jules Verne and now they are dreaming with H. G. Wells. For the revival of interest in both authors, we can thank the moving picture industry. Our largest local secondhand bookstore has no used

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copies of Wells's "science fiction." His books are taken from the shelves almost as soon as they are put there, a salesman told me.

### School Libraries

*Public School Library Statistics, 1958-59*, published by the U.S. Office of Education, reports that about half of the elementary school pupils involved in the survey attend schools with centralized libraries. There is an average of 4.6 books per pupil in these schools—not enough—and the average amount spent per child for books is \$1.43. This isn't enough either, so don't be satisfied if the appropriation in your school is "above average."

Central libraries are found in about 97 per cent of the high schools. They average six volumes per pupil, with an average expenditure per pupil of \$1.85.

### Conference at National

The National College of Education, Evanston, Illinois, is celebrating its 75th anniversary. One of the special features of the year's program is a Reading Conference, August 7-11, 1961. The conference, conducted by Dr. E. A. Betts and Miss Carolyn Welch, will have as its theme "Building Each Complete Life Through Reading Skills." Dr. W. R. Rucker, Dean of the College, is coordinator for the conference.

### Book Lists

The 1961 edition of *Best Books for Children* lists 3,300 titles in print, arranged by grade and subject. R. R.

Bowker Company, 62 West 45th Street, New York 36, New York. \$3.00.

*World History Book List for High Schools: A Selection for Supplementary Reading*. Bulletin 31, National Council for the Social Studies, 1959. \$1.25 from the Council, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

### Antiques

You may want to add to your classroom library an adaption of *Noah Webster's Bluebacked Speller*, the original of which appeared about the time the United States of America was born. The proverbs, wise sayings, and bits of information will interest many children, and the book will be useful to children who are studying the Revolutionary War period. Of course, it leans heavily to phonics. *The American Speller: An Adaptation of Noah Webster's Bluebacked Speller*, illustrated by Barbara Cooney. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. \$2.95.

### Purely Personal

Readers who want to address letters or materials to the editor of this column should be sure to send them to me at The University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 4, Penna. Some letters have been forwarded to me from The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Penna. We are good friends, but are completely separate institutions, well over a hundred miles apart. Confusing? It certainly is.



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### **TOO MANY BOZOS**

By LILIAN MOORE, illustrations by Susan Perl. "One of the best of the easy-to-read books, with a universal appeal in its theme of a small boy's search for a pet."—*N.Y. Times Book Review*

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### **ROUND ROUND WORLD**

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### **WHERE DO YOU LIVE?**

By EVA KNOX EVANS, illustrations by Beatrice Darwin. About a fascinating walk through the woods. "Sure to hold the heart of young beginning readers for many a telling."—*The Brooklyn Daily*

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY

**MARY C. AUSTIN**

*President, International Reading Association*

ASK NOT what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country . . . ask not what America will do for you (citizens of the world), but what together we can do for the freedom of man.”

With the words of President Kennedy's stirring inauguration address still ringing in their ears, your IRA officers and directors met in February to consider a lengthy agenda. At that time the Board explored and approved two worthy activities: A “Books for Appalachia” project which will place thousands of good, used text and trade books into the schoolrooms, libraries, and hands of individual pupils in a depressed area of the United States, and the translation into other languages of selected articles from *THE READING TEACHER* for use by educators in foreign countries.

According to the first proposal, Books for Appalachia will be a co-operative effort of IRA, the Council of the Southern Mountains, and the schools or other institutions in the designated receiving area. The Council of the Southern Mountains will act as the facilitating agency, while IRA councils will serve as collecting and sending agencies.

As the books are received in the Appalachian South, teachers will

have priority in the choice of books for their classrooms. Local librarians will have second choice, and surplus books will become available for individual pupils through a carefully formulated plan.

During May and June a number of IRA councils will participate in a pilot program for the summer delivery of books. Please communicate with the IRA Organization Committee Chairman, Dr. LaVerne Strong, Random House, 457 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y., for further information about Books for Appalachia.

With regard to the second project, the Board agreed that “permission be given to people of foreign countries who wish to translate selections from, or an entire copy of, *THE READING TEACHER*, provided they use the material for purely professional purposes and with the permission of the Publications Committee through its chairman.” Two copies of the material translated should be sent to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer. Requests for translations into Spanish and Japanese have been received recently.

Let me thank you most sincerely for your splendid cooperation in making 1960-61 an especially good year for the Association.

Are Your Pupils

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Reading is a complex combination of many psycho-physical activities. How can you be sure that your students are advancing in their mastery of *all* the important reading skills?

*Achieving Reading Skills*, edited by William Elfert and Dr. Alfred Weinstein, assures that mastery. First, the book contains fifty brief, interesting reading selections—*graded in difficulty!* *Achieving Reading Skills*, therefore, is perfect for a multi-level reading program—for meeting the individual needs of youngsters ranging in reading ability from third to seventh year. Group work and differentiation of reading assignments become practical and simple with this text.

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- drawing inferences

Then, the second part of *Achieving Reading Skills* contains remedial drills for intensive training in each aspect of reading—providing you with diagnostic, practice, *and* remedial material in a single, scientifically devised volume!

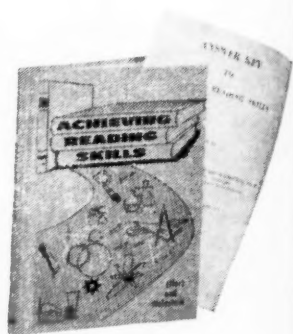
There's so much more to *Achieving Reading Skills*—its provision for self-evaluation, its stimulation of extensive reading in and out of school, its ingenious typography and attractive illustrations—that you really must send for an examination copy today! A separate answer key, to relieve the teacher of time-consuming marking chores, is furnished.

William Elfert and Dr. Alfred Weinstein, editors of *Achieving Reading Skills*, have extensive practical experience in college reading clinics and in the public schools. Both now hold supervisory positions in the New York City school system. Dr. Lawrence H. Feigenbaum of the City College of New York, author of several books on reading in his own right, acted as consulting editor in this project.

*Achieving Reading Skills* is a purposeful skill text, yet so entertainingly and interestingly presented that your primary objective in reading instruction—fostering a love of books and reading—is certain of accomplishment.

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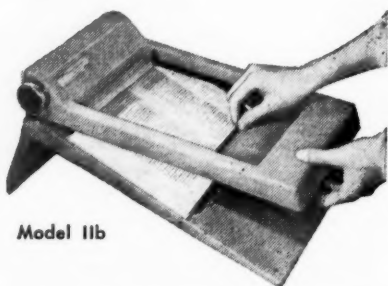
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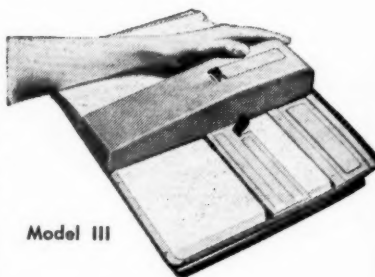
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by Henry A. Bamman and Ursula Hogan, both of Sacramento State College, and Charles E. Greene, Former Superintendent of Schools, Denver, Colorado. 1961. 320 pp., \$4.25

*Reading Instruction in the Secondary School* approaches the problems of teaching reading in high school and the methods of overcoming such problems in a most practical way. Subscribing to the belief that participation in the teaching of reading is the responsibility not only of English teachers who are primarily concerned but also of the entire school staff, it demonstrates how each teacher can contribute to this end.

Not only will students preparing to teach find it a valuable text, but teachers themselves and school administrators will discover it a mine of information and suggestion.

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#### APPENDIX

- A Professional Materials for the Teacher of Reading
- B Workbooks, Texts, and Series of Readers; Audio-Visual Materials for the Improvement of Secondary School Reading
- C Lists of Books for Retarded Readers
- D Phonetic Principles; Structural Analysis; Principles of Syllabication; Table of Affixes and Roots
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### *An Important Revision*

## HOW TO INCREASE READING ABILITY

by Albert J. Harris, Queens College, Flushing. Fourth Edition, 1961. 663 pp. \$6.00

Topics that have been extensively rewritten include: factors influencing readiness; the teaching of beginning reading; individualized and group reading; causation of reading disabilities; teaching for independence in work recognition; and improvement of rate of reading. Lists of references, workbooks, commercial reading games, booklists, etc., have been brought up-to-date.

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